

LAW BREAKERS SUSPENSE STORIES

10¢ NO 12
CDC

CAPITOL
PUBLICATION

ALL RIGHT.. YOU CAN
COME OUT NOW, BERYL.
I HOPE THOSE HUNGRY
INSECTS DIDN'T
SCARE YOU TOO
MUCH !

M. LOU
MORALES



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

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CANNONS

BOMBERS

TANKS

CRUISERS

BATTLESHIPS

PT BOATS

MARINES

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WACS

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SOLDIERS

SAILORS

WACS

MORTARS

MARINES

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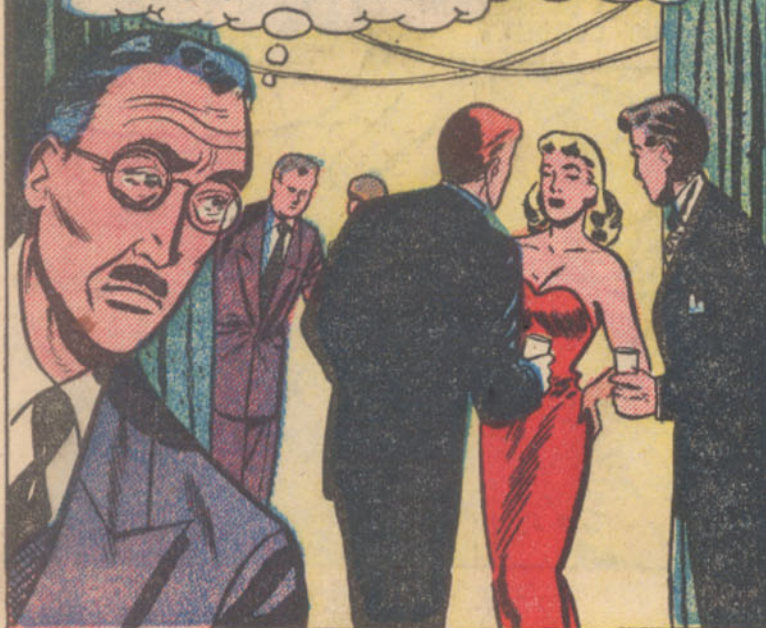
JETS

LAWBREAKERS

HELLO, DEAR READERS. IF YOU'RE NOT TOO SQUEAMISH, READ THE NEXT EIGHT PAGES... YOU'LL BE TREATED TO A BRIEF REVIEW IN NATURE STUDY... MAINLY INSECTS... AND THE BEAUTY IN...

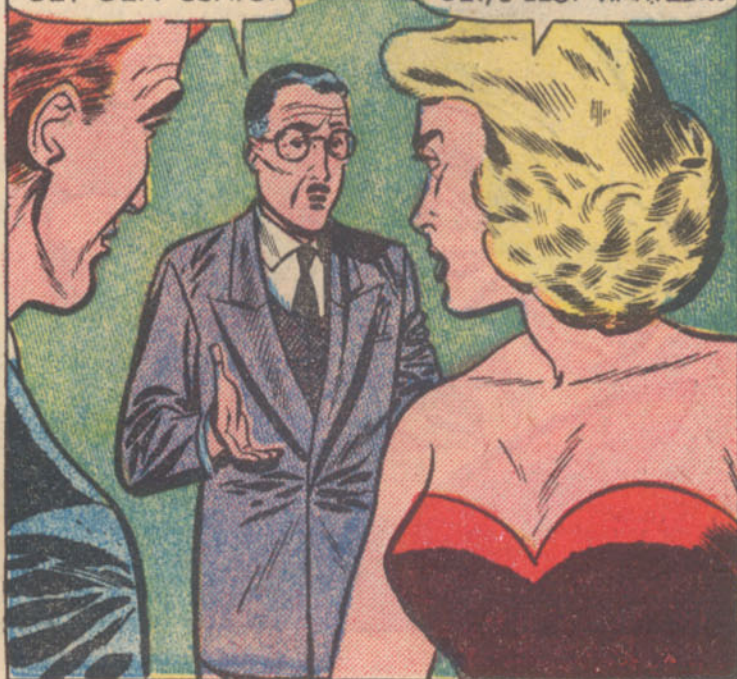


THERE GOES BERYL FLIRTING WITH THE YOUNGER INSTRUCTORS AGAIN! IF IT WEREN'T BECAUSE DEAN FOSTER CAME PERSONALLY TO PICK MY WIFE AND ME UP, I WOULD NEVER HAVE ATTENDED THIS PRE-HOLIDAY GATHERING!



IT'S RATHER LATE, DEAR, YOU MUST BE TIRED. I'LL GET OUR COATS.

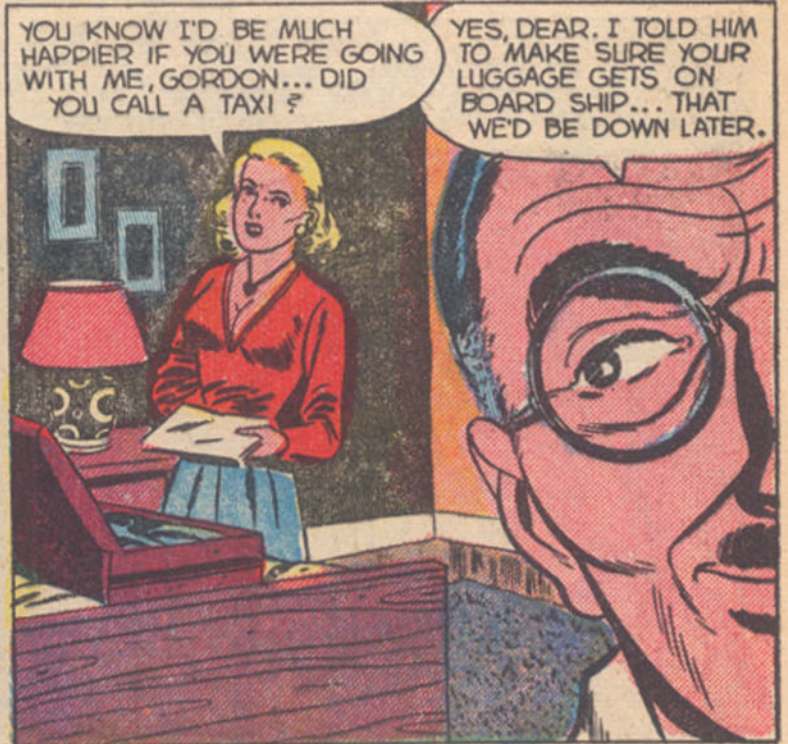
BUT.. BUT, GORDON, WE SO RARELY GO OUT, I JUST WANTED...



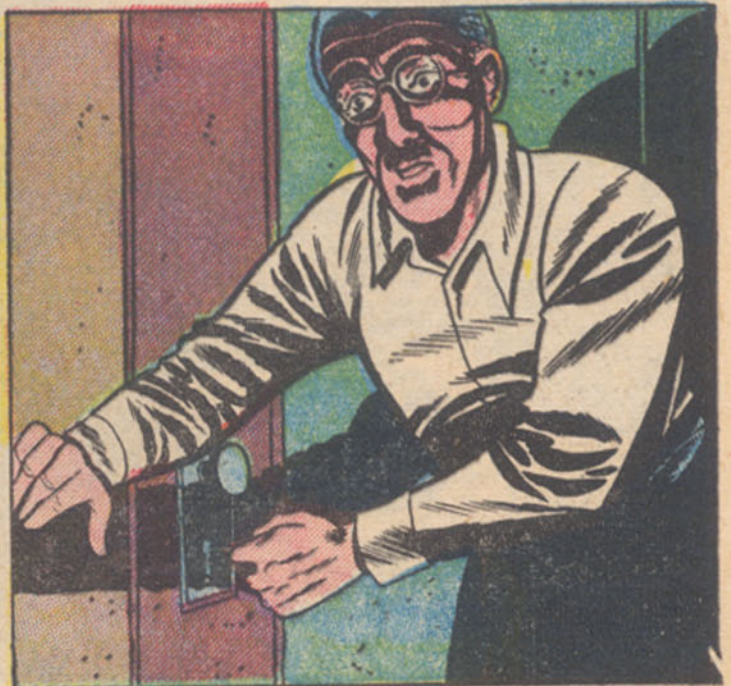
LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS



AS BERYL TURNED TO GO INTO THE KITCHEN...



LAWBREAKERS

NOW, MY DEAR BERYL, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO REMEMBER EVERY TIME YOU BELIEVE YOURSELF THE BELLE OF THE BALL...

GORDON! HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY? LET ME OUT OF THIS CLOSET!



DON'T EXCITE YOURSELF MRS. HILLER.. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE COMPANY SOON... VERY SOON...



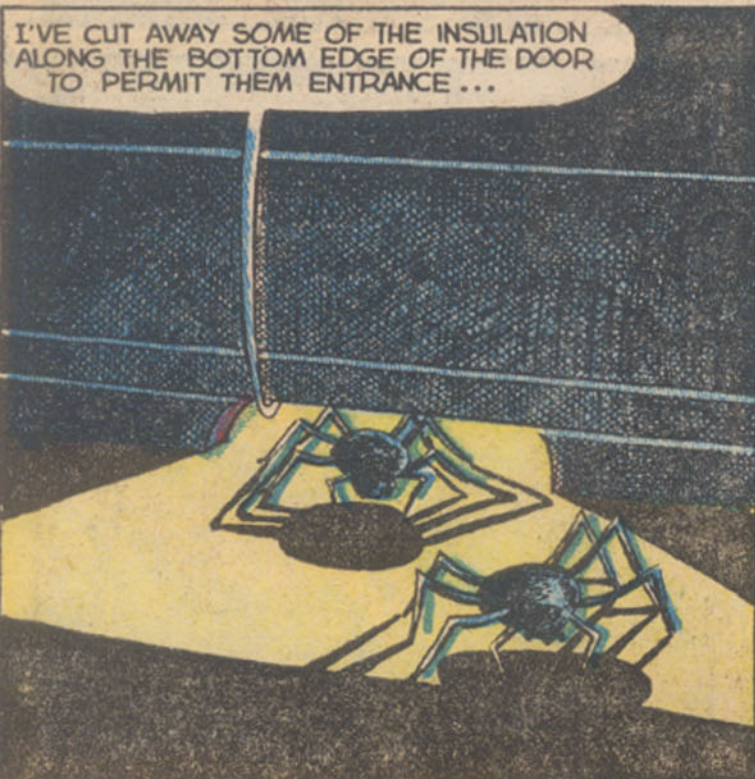
I'VE 'BORROWED' SOME SPECIMENS FROM PROFESSOR TINDECK'S CLASS.. ROACHES, BEES, A FEW HUNGRY MICE, AND SPIDERS...



I DOUBT IF YOU'LL LOOK VERY ATTRACTIVE AFTER THE LITTLE CREATURES FINISH FEASTING!



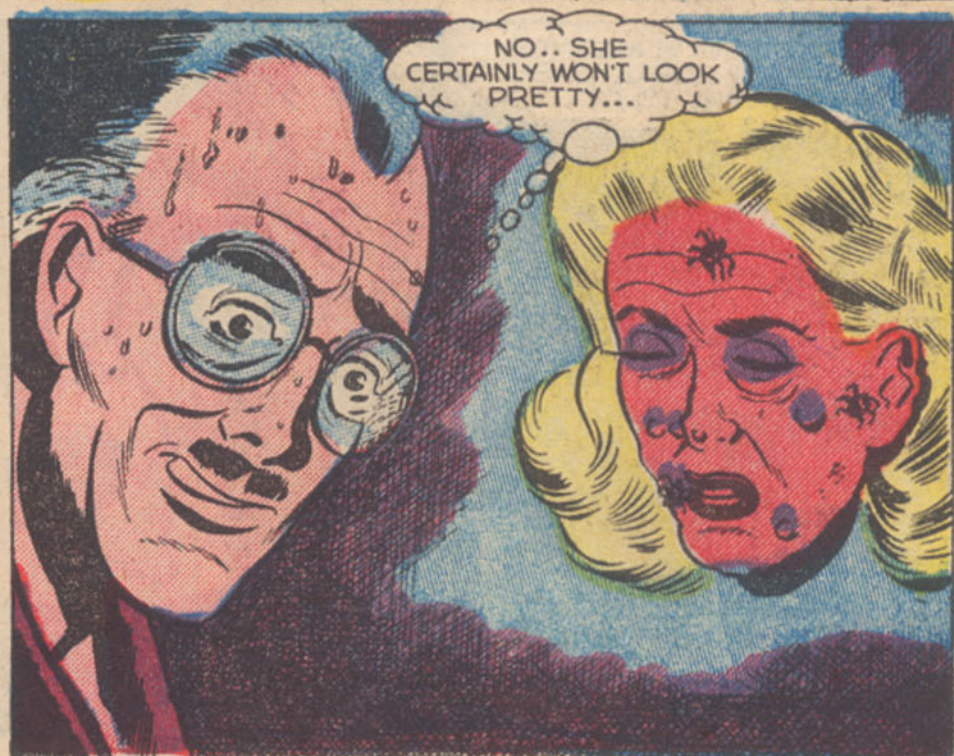
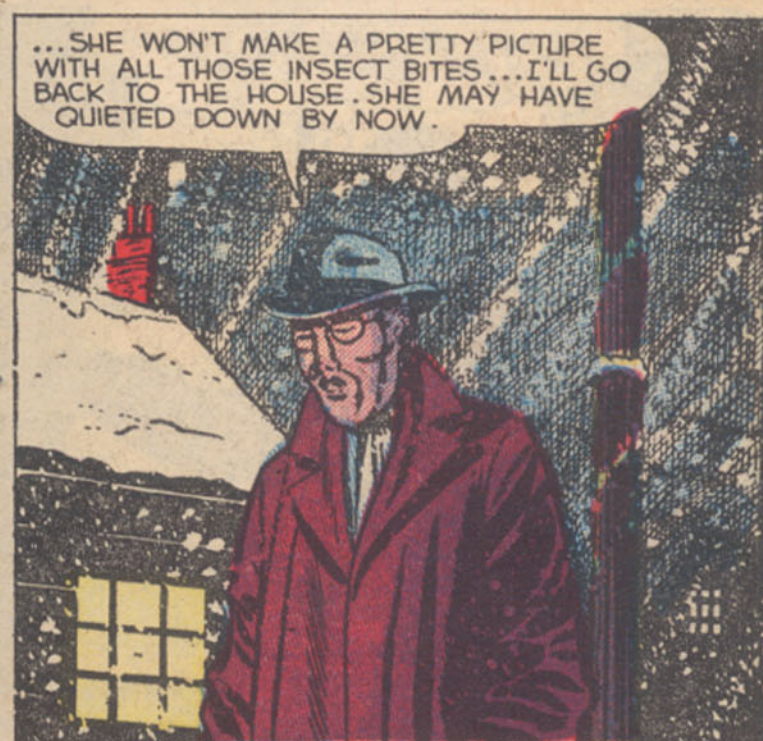
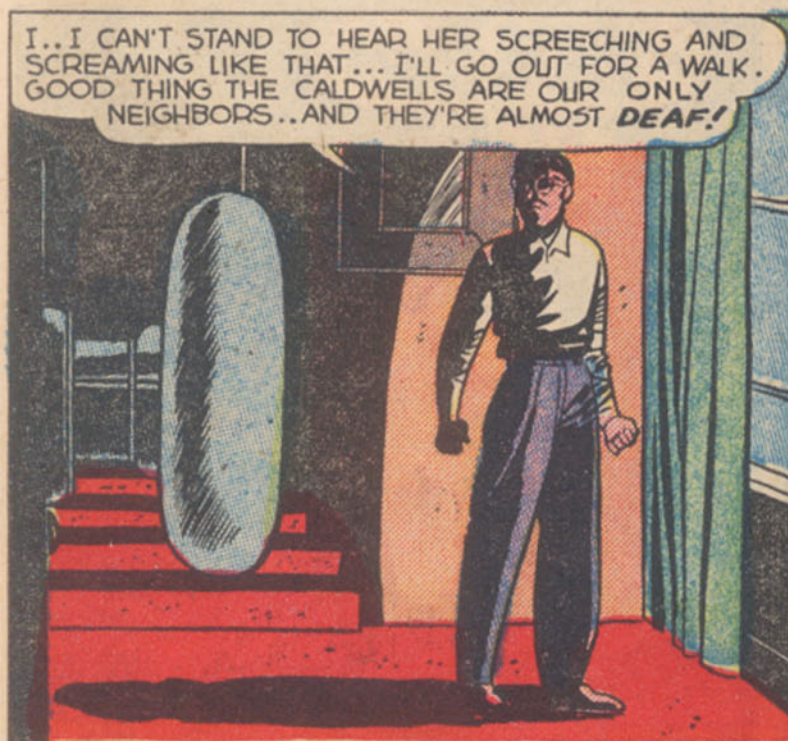
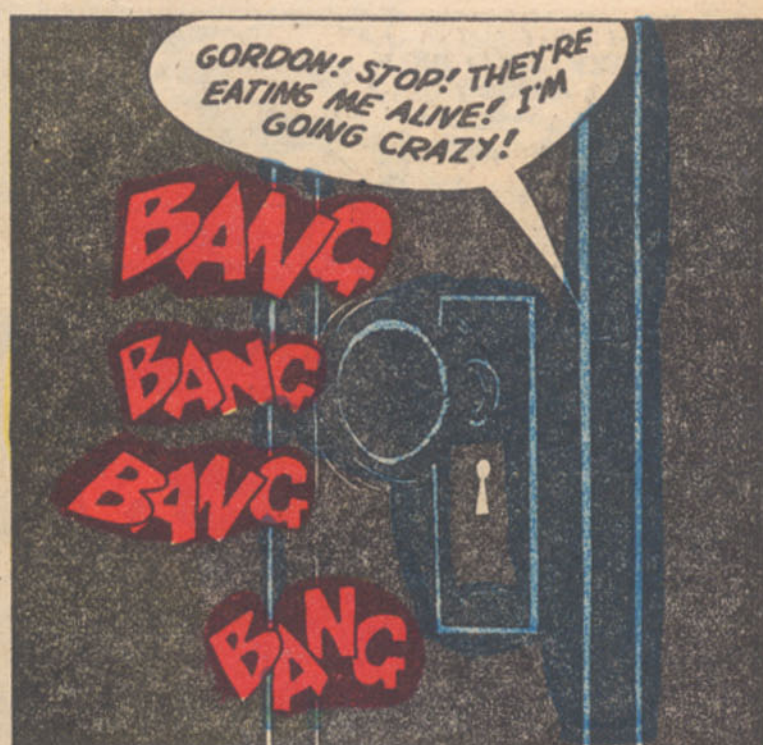
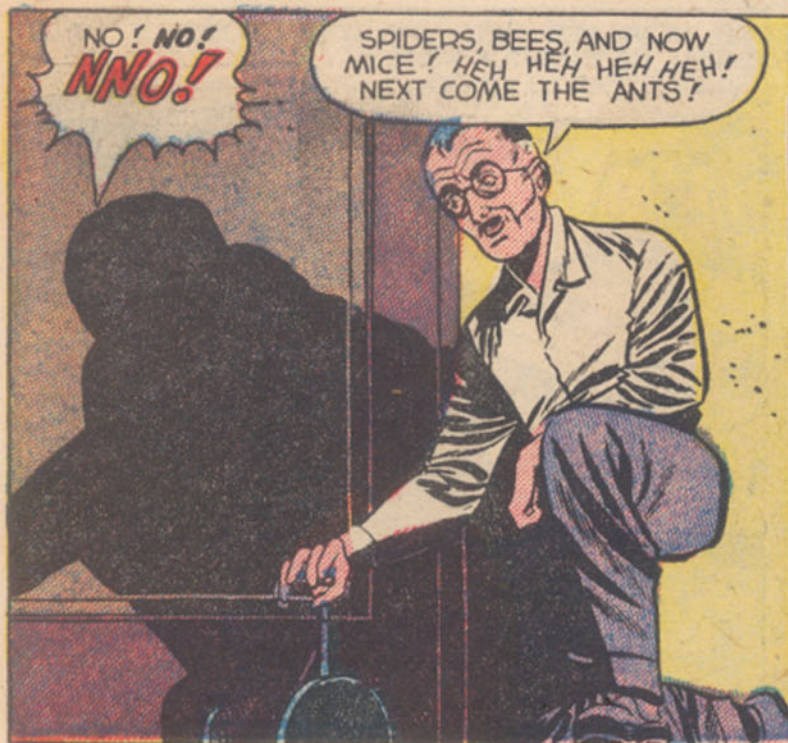
I'VE CUT AWAY SOME OF THE INSULATION ALONG THE BOTTOM EDGE OF THE DOOR TO PERMIT THEM ENTRANCE...



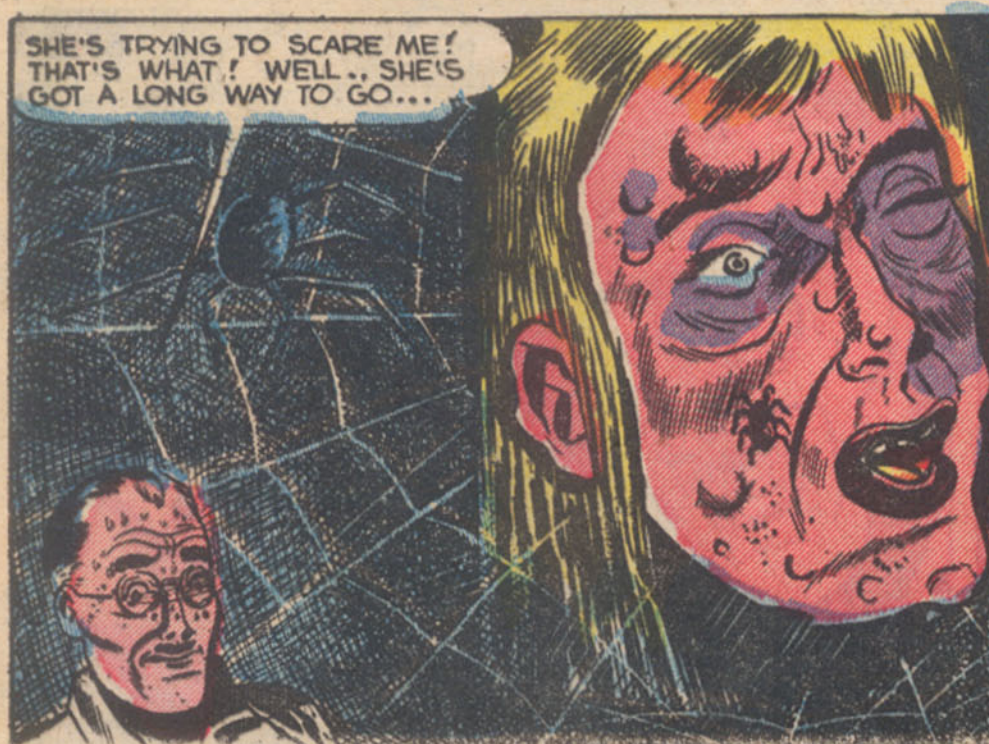
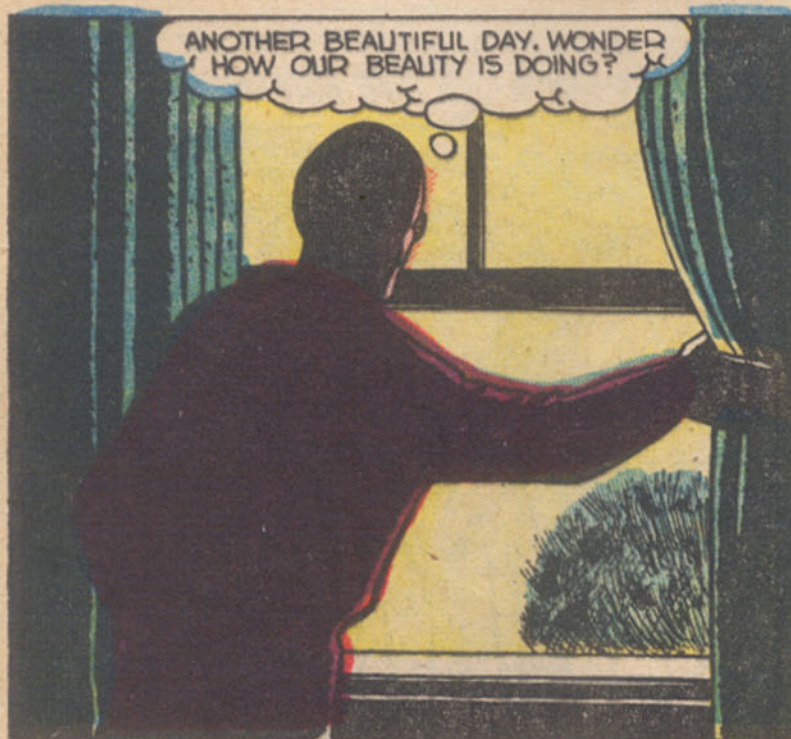
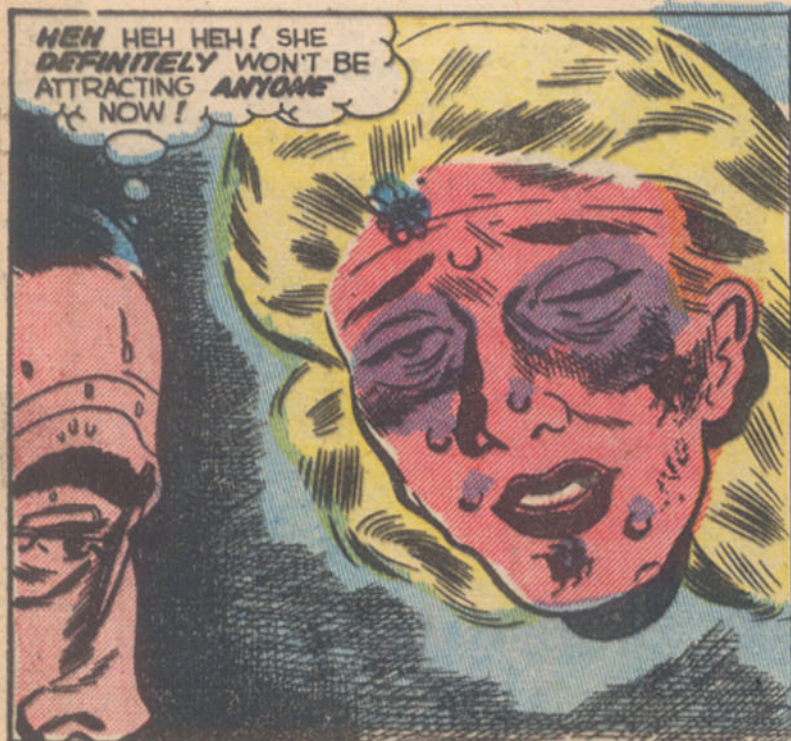
NO! GORDON! LET ME OUT!



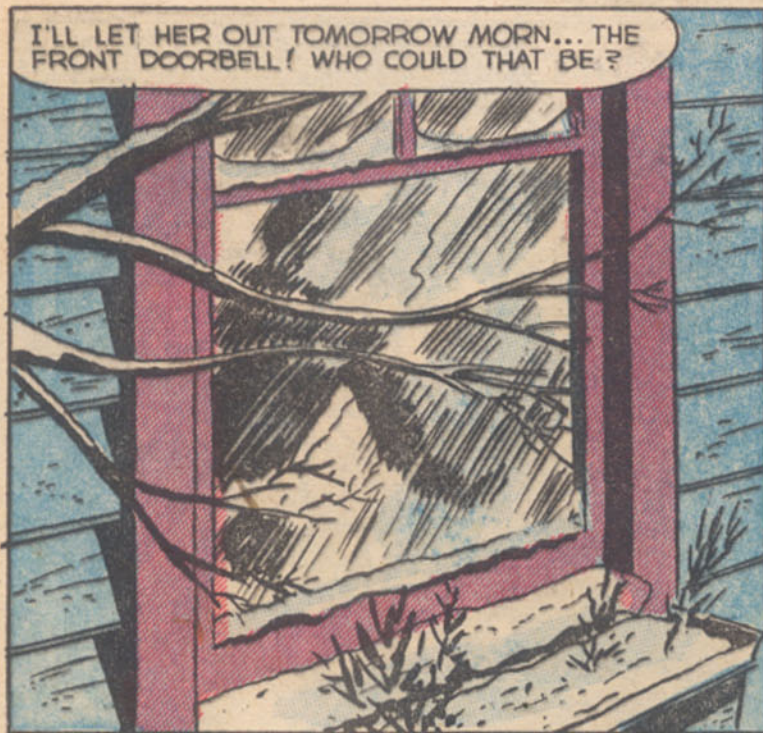
LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS



I'LL LET HER OUT TOMORROW MORN... THE FRONT DOORBELL! WHO COULD THAT BE?



AH... MR. AND MRS. CALDWELL... COME IN... COME IN...

WE WERE ON OUR WAY INTO TOWN AND THOUGHT WE'D DROP IN AND FIND OUT IF BERYL HAD WRITTEN YET.



YES... I... I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM HER JUST THIS MORNING. SHE'S HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME.

OH, THAT'S FINE. THE POOR GIRL SHOULD ENJOY HERSELF A LITTLE, WHILE SHE'S STILL YOUNG.



YES... YES, SHE SHOULD...

SHE'D BETTER WRITE US A LETTER! WE'LL STOP BY TOMORROW AGAIN IF WE DON'T HEAR FROM HER.



NOSY PEOPLE! MAYBE THEY SUSPECT... NO...



BERYL HAS BEEN IN THAT BLACK CLOSET THREE DAYS NOW.. AND NOT EVEN A WHIMPER! I'M SURE SHE'LL NEVER FORGET **THIS** EXPERIENCE. I'D BETTER LET HER OUT BEFORE SHE DIES OF STARVATION.

LAWBREAKERS

BERYL? PAY ATTENTION. I'M GOING TO LET YOU OUT, BUT I WANT YOU TO SEE HOW **UN**BEAUTIFUL YOU CAN GET! I'VE BROUGHT YOUR HAND MIRROR... YOU'LL NEVER WANT...



WHA...



HA!
BERYL! HAH HAH HAH HAH!
BERYL! NO! HAH HAH HAH!



THIS WILL BE A TERRIBLE SHOCK TO HIS WIFE!

WONDER WHAT HE WAS UP TO WITH THIS CLAY FORMED HEAD AND KITCHEN MOP HAIR ON A BROOMSTICK? HE MUST HAVE BEEN PLANNING A JOKE ON HIS WIFE WHEN HE DIED FROM A HEART ATTACK!



MY DARLING HUSBAND MUST NEVER HAVE HEARD OF PICKING A LOCK WITH A BOBBY PIN. HE CERTAINLY HAS A GRIM SENSE OF HUMOR, THOUGH. HOPE HE AT LEAST GETS A CHUCKLE OUT OF THE LITTLE JOKE I'M PLAYING ON **HIM**!

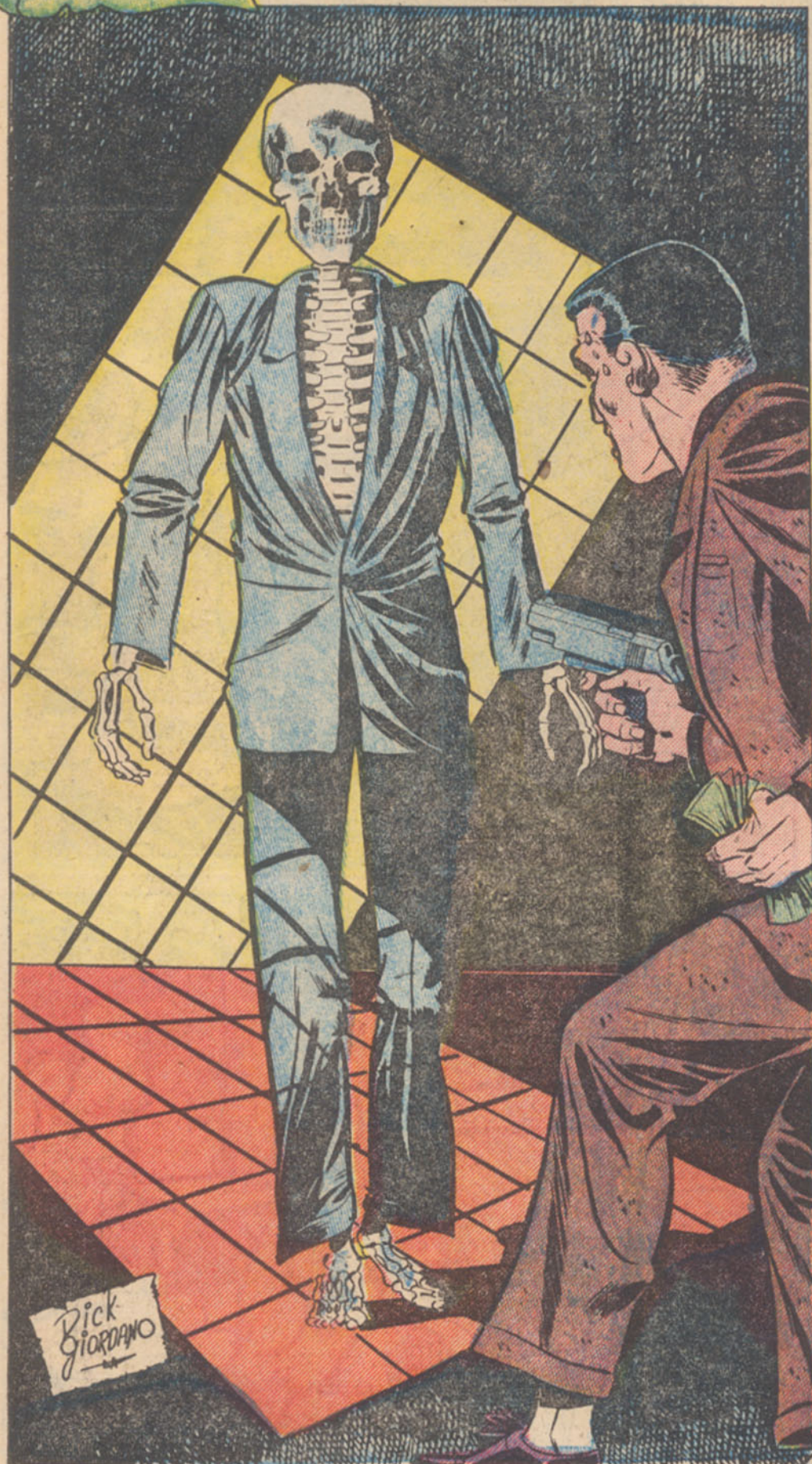


THE END

LAWBREAKERS

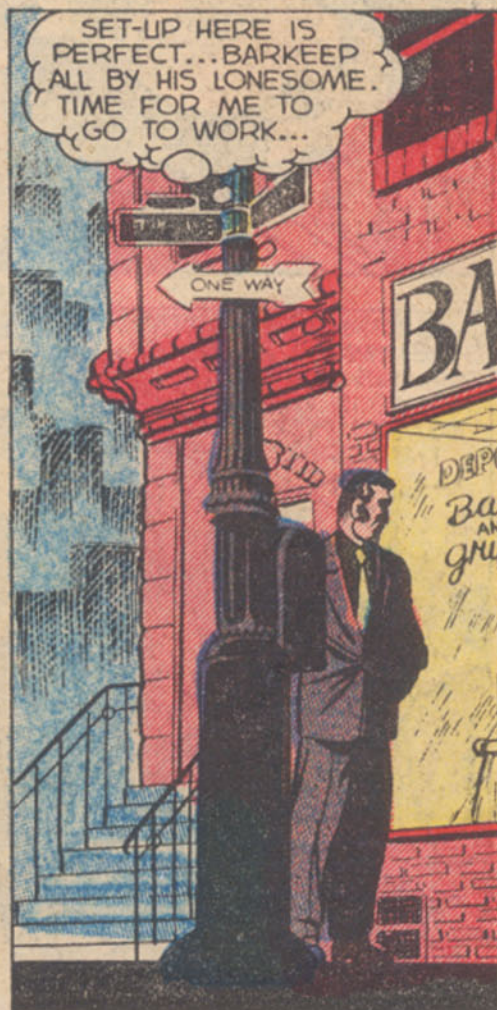
DEATH WEARS A BRIGHT BLUE SUIT!

HE WAS A STRANGER TO TOWN... AND HE USED A GLEAMING .45 AS HIS MACABRE CALLING-CARD. A FISTFUL OF QUICK DOLLAR WAS WHAT HE WAS SEARCHING FOR, BUT WHAT HE FOUND WAS THAT...

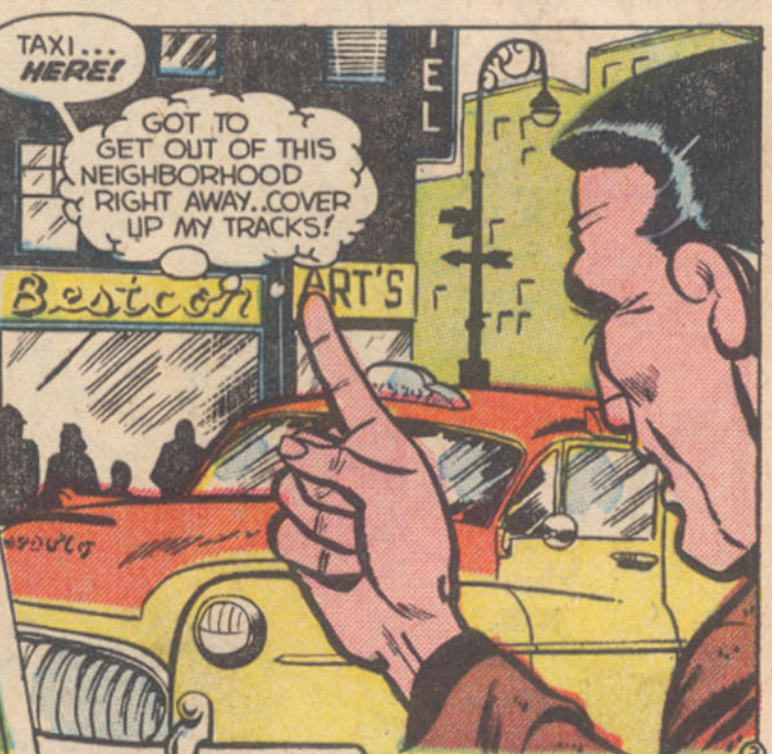
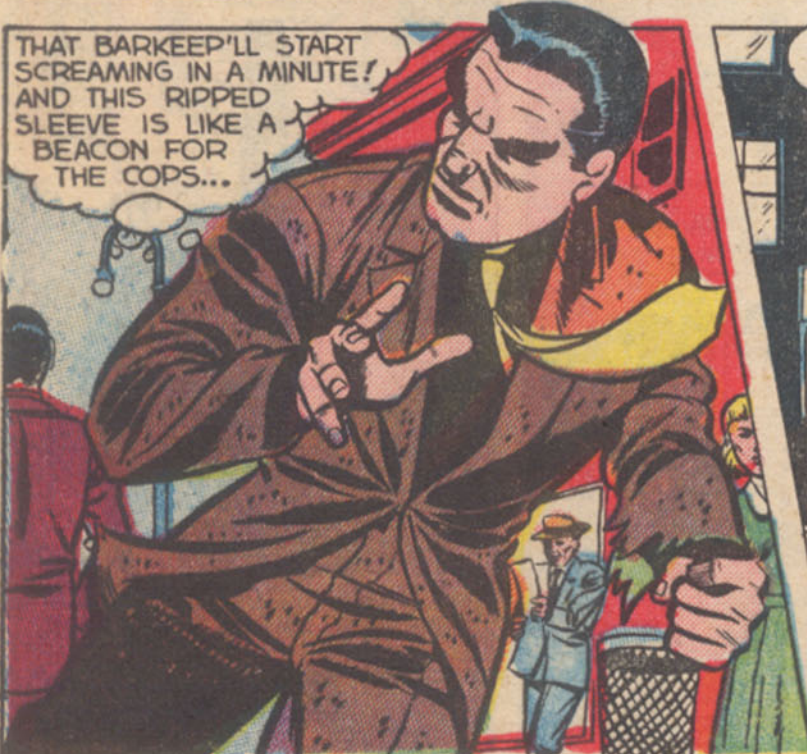


WHEN THE 4:30 BUS PULLED INTO THE DOWNTOWN DEPOT THAT AFTERNOON, THERE WERE 36 PASSENGERS ON BOARD. ONE OF THEM WAS A STRANGER WHO SLIPPED AWAY UNNOTICED...

NOT ONE OF THEM EVEN LOOKED AT ME! I DITCH THIS TICKET AND NO ONE CAN PROVE I WAS EVEN HERE...



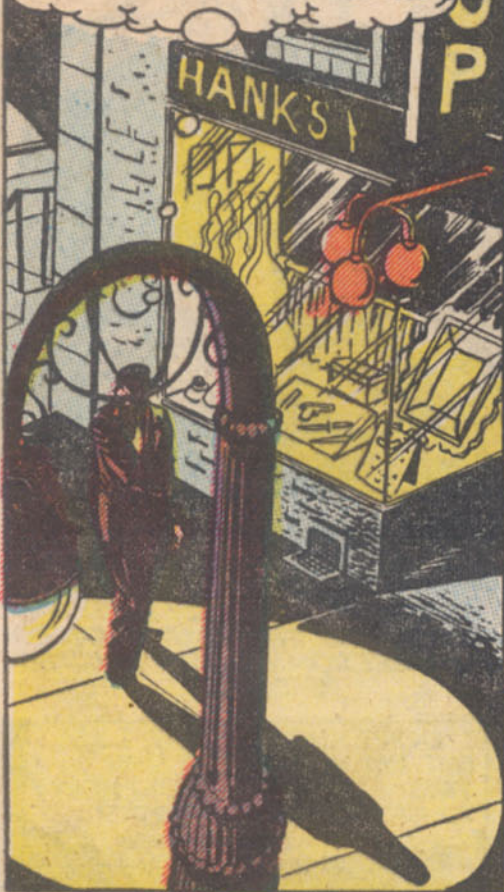
LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS

FOR AN HOUR THE STRANGER SWITCHED FROM ONE TAXI TO ANOTHER, CRISS-CROSSING CRAZILY BACK AND FORTH ACROSS TOWN. FINALLY...

NOT ONE OF THEM HACKIES SAW MY FACE. NOW, IF I CAN JUST HOLE UP FOR THE NIGHT...



W-WAIT! THERE'S MY OUT... **ANOTHER** SUIT, FROM THIS PAWNSHOP!

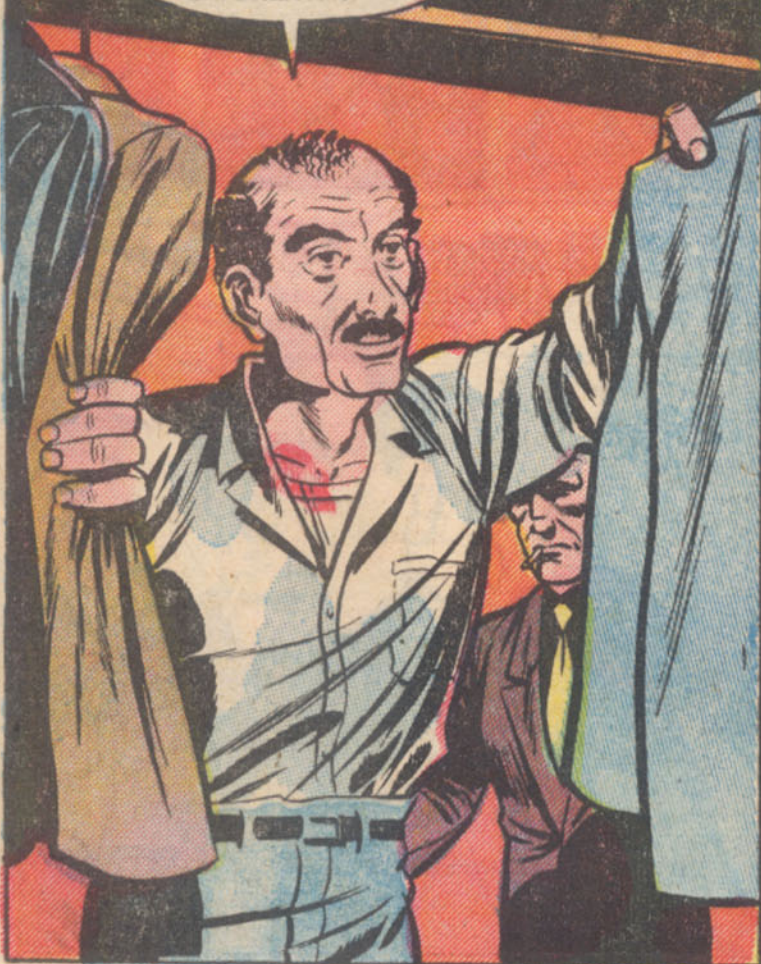


EVENING, SIR! WHAT CAN I DO FOR...

I NEED A SUIT... ANY COLOR BUT BROWN. AND I NEED IT FAST!



YOU LOOK TO ME LIKE A SIZE 38. NOW LET'S SEE...HMM... **HERE'S** A NICE GARMENT...



THIS SHOULD FIT...ONLY THERE'S **ONE** TROUBLE WITH IT. I SHOULD TELL YOU...



GIVE IT HERE! THERE'S YOUR DOUGH ON THE COUNTER!

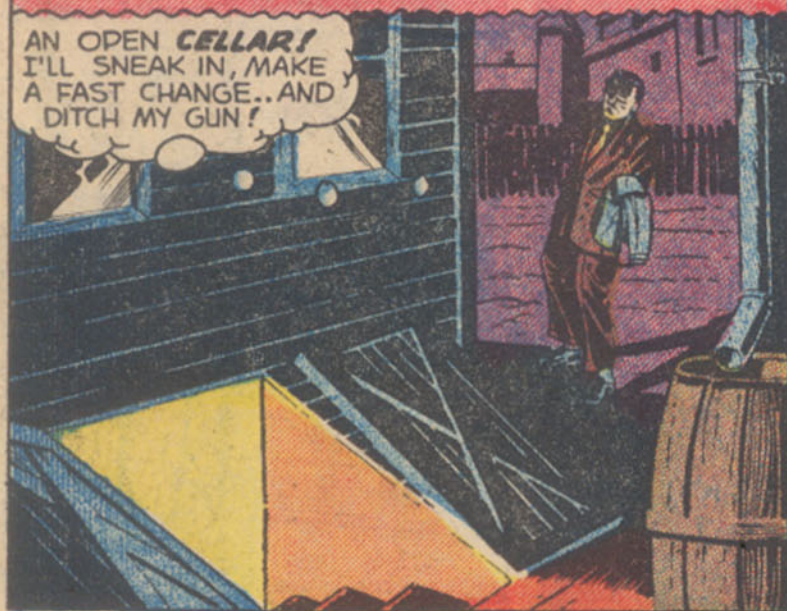
ABOUT THE SUIT, MISTER... I THINK YOU OUGHT TO KNOW...



LAWBREAKERS

WITHOUT WAITING TO HEAR WHAT THE PAWNSHOP OWNER HAD TO SAY, THE STRANGER HURRIED AWAY THROUGH STREETS HE HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE. AT LAST HE SAW WHAT HE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR...

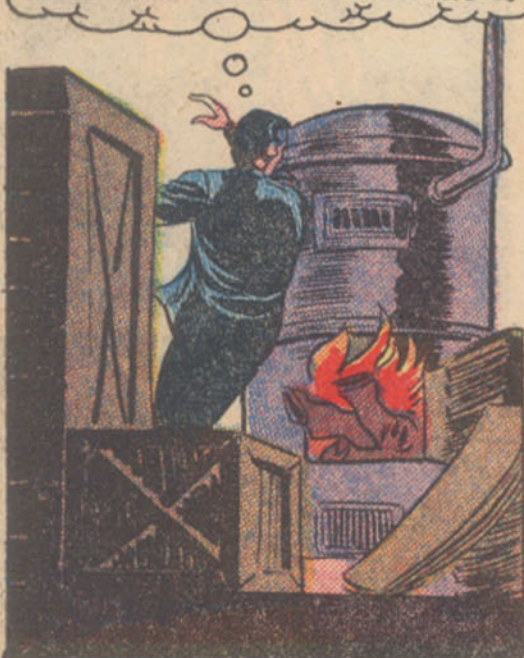
AN OPEN CELLAR!
I'LL SNEAK IN, MAKE
A FAST CHANGE...AND
DITCH MY GUN!



FITS AS IF IT WAS
MADE FOR ME! IN AN-
OTHER MINUTE THAT
BROWN SUIT THE COPS
ARE LOOKING FOR...



...WILL BE A HANDFUL OF ASHES!
THEY'LL **NEVER** BE ABLE TO
HANG THAT ROBBERY ON ME **NOW!**



NOW TO GET BACK TO THE CENTER
OF TOWN AND GRAB THE FIRST
OUTBOUND BUS. THE COPS'LL
NEVER BE ABLE TO TRACE MY
PATH... EVEN I COULDN'T TELL
THEM WHERE I BOUGHT THE
SUIT, OR WHERE I BURNT
THE OLD ONE!



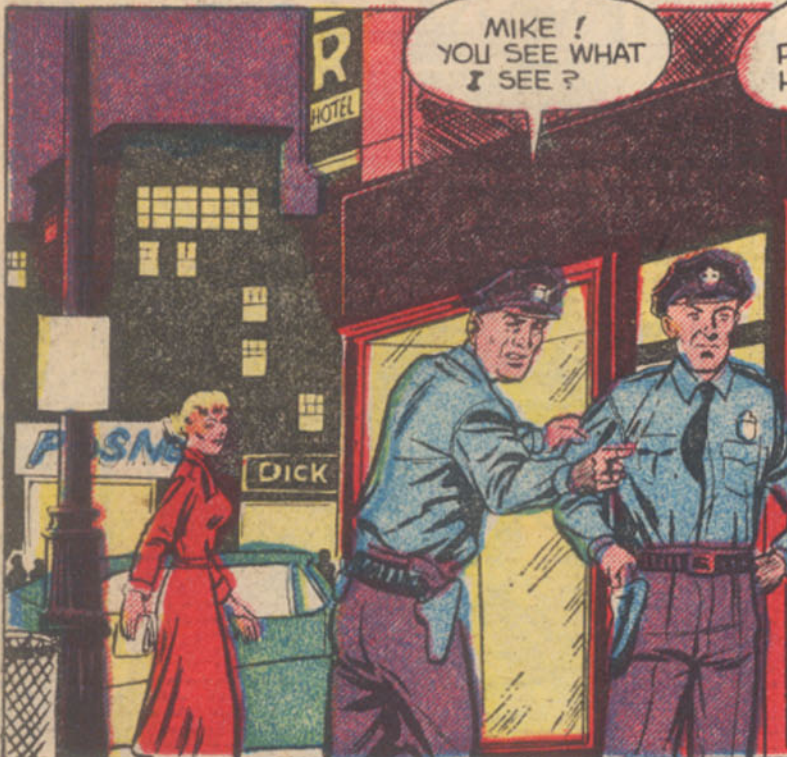
45 MINUTES LATER, AFTER
INFINITE TWISTINGS AND
TURNINGS THROUGH A MAZE OF
STREETS COMPLETELY UNKNOWN
TO HIM, THE STRANGER EMERGED
IN A SECTION HE HADN'T VISITED
BEFORE...

I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM,
BUT I'M NO MARKED MAN IN
THIS SET OF THREADS! NOW
TO GET TO THE BUS DEPOT...



MIKE!
YOU SEE WHAT
I SEE?

THAT MUST BE **HIM**, ALL
RIGHT! WALKING AROUND LIKE
HE DIDN'T HAVE A TROUBLE
IN THE WORLD!



LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS



LAWBREAKERS

WITH THE DATE OF HIS EXECUTION JUST ONE MONTH AWAY, SAM THOMAS RESOLVED TO GAMBLE HIS LIFE ON A...

WORKING FEVERISHLY EVERY NIGHT, DESPERATE SAM THOMAS SLOWLY INCHED HIS WAY FOWARD....

BREAKOUT!

THIS SHOVEL AND CROWBAR THE BOYS SMUGGLED INTO MY CELL ARE JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED! WORKING AT NIGHTS, LIKE THIS, I MAY BE ABLE TO TUNNEL MYSELF OUTTA "DEATH ROW!!"



TWO WEEKS I'VE BEEN WORKING MY FINGERS TO THE NUB... AND THEY AIN'T GOT WISE YET! THAT JACKET OF MINE OVER THE HOLE IN MY CELL, DURING THE DAY, SURE HAS FOOLED THE GUARDS! GOTTA... KEEP... GOING...



THE DAYS CONTINUED TO TICK BY, AND THEN...

ONLY TWO DAYS TO GO 'TIL MY TIME RUNS OUT! IT'S GOTTA BE NOW... UGHH! OR NEVER! ONCE I CRACK MY WAY THROUGH THIS STUFF!



BROKE THROUGH! NOW TO WIGGLE THROUGH... GET MY BEARINGS... AND COMPLETE. UGHH!... MY BREAKOUT! W-WONDER WHERE I AM?



N-N-O... IT CAN'T BE! A- ALL THAT BACK-BREAKING WORK TO WIND UP WHERE THEY WANTED TO SEND ME ANYWAY... THE DEATH CHAMBER!





THE GHOST OF JUSTICE

All eyes in the room were focused on the big electric clock which hung on the wall. The second hand was going around and ticking out the life of a man. Suddenly the telephone bell rang and Big Bob Daly, boss of the mob, answered. He listened attentively and then made but one remark.

"Fine."

He then turned to the rest of the men in that room and spoke what they all wanted to hear.

"Frank Kassel was electrocuted at 10:05. The doctor pronounced him dead. Now we can organize the territory on the other side of the river. If they don't take our slot machines, then we'll blast them to pieces."

All the men left the room except Jim Gunter, Big Bob's lieutenant. Jim spoke what was on his mind.

"Did we have to frame Frank? Why couldn't you let me rub him out? I always felt he was a copper who joined us to get the goods on you."

"This electrocution proves he wasn't a copper," replied Big Bob. "When Frank joined our mob he was recommended by Lou Simpers, who said Frank worked for him in Cleveland. I sort of got suspicious when we spotted Frank nosing around my desk. So we framed him for the killing of that storekeeper on Pine Street. I figured if Frank was a copper they would have to come out with it at the trial."

The electric light blinked twice. That was the signal that a message was coming in on the private phone. It also meant that Jim had to get out the office. It wasn't a secret that somewhere in town there was a "Big Boss"

who really gave the orders to the mob. The "Big Boss" always knew what was going to happen and was someone high in politics. Big Bob spoke softly on the phone while Jim hung around outside in the corridor. Suddenly Jim looked up and saw what had to be a ghost.

"Frank," he managed to get past his lips. "You were just put away in the hot seat. What kind of a trick is this?" And then recovering his senses, he went for the special gun he carried in the shoulder holster. It was equipped with a silencer. He got his finger on the trigger but Frank grabbed him in a powerful embrace that felt like the jaws of a steel vise.

"Take your finger off that trigger or you'll kill yourself," said the small man who should have been dead. But the suggestion came a fraction of a second too late. There was a dull click and a body dropped to the floor. Then a stream of blood began to trickle over his clothing. Jim's eyes were still open but his heart no longer was beating. And there was fear written all over his face. Frank opened the door to the room and saw Big Bob replace the telephone.

"Still taking orders from the Big Boss, eh?" said Frank in a voice that sounded unearthly. "He just told you not to worry. I was dead and couldn't be a copper. Now you can move in on Steve's territory. Wipe out his boys if Steve refuses to play ball with you."

Big Bob blinked twice to make certain he wasn't looking at an illusion or a ghost. He was convinced that he was speaking to a real live person. He looked through the door as though to try to find Jim.

"Jim is dead if you happen to be looking for him," said Frank. "And don't try to operate that little trick gun you have in your sleeve or you'll be committing suicide."

It took but a slight shift to get that .40 derringer into position and a bullet left the barrel. There was a metal paper weight on

the desk in front of Frank. The bullet hit the metal and rebounded, striking Big Bob on the forehead. A trickle of blood ran down his face as the gang leader died.

Walter Simpson, head of the Federal Crime Bureau wasn't exactly a happy man as he sat in his special car with his assistant Burt Horton.

"I have a funny feeling something has gone wrong with our plans. Frank left the prison through the back entrance and drove away in his car at 10:15. If anything should happen to him now that we have gone so far I would feel terrible."

"All this was Frank's idea from the start," pointed out Agent Burt Horton. "He said it was well worth the gamble with his life if he could get the goods on this vicious gang that is threatening to become all powerful not only in this state but across the entire country. So you played along with his idea. He posed as a gangster. When they framed him for a murder he said it was a natural. Make out he would be electrocuted and he could come back as a ghost."

"Frank said he would contact us as soon as he visited the gang leaders. We aren't to make a move until we hear from him," replied Walter Simpson. "Call it intuition or whatever you want. There's just a funny feeling running down my spine that this case is going to have a different ending than we anticipated."

From the outside, Corriger's Garage looked no different than the other five garages on Main Street. But behind the mask of respectability it contained the meeting place of the members of the gang. Just now Emile Fremer was seated around a table with the other five hoods, playing poker. Actually the room was part of the large service elevator which moved up and down and thus brought the men to their secret meeting place on the top floor.

"Something's up," announced Emile to the others. "I tried calling the boss when I went out but no luck. When we finish, I'll run over and see him. I know he has some work cut out for us."

When he finished speaking he looked again at the cards in his hand. He was about to draw two cards when he noticed another person next to the table.

"Frank," he gulped. "It can't be . . . why you are dead."

"Just continue playing and keep your hands on the table," ordered Frank. "I see three shoulder holsters and the rest of you carry your guns in your hip pockets. Of course I am dead. Just came back from beyond the grave to wipe you all out. I don't

mean I will kill you. You will all kill yourselves."

"He's no ghost," shouted Emile to the others. "Let's finish him off. This is some kind of a trick. Ten to one he really was a copper."

In his anxiety to get up, Emile collided with one of the other men. The table went over and hit the elevator switch. There was darkness and the elevator started to descend quickly. The cable snapped and the elevator and all its occupants plunged to the pit below. Then the roof housing which held the elevator machinery tumbled down into the pit. There were a few moans and then silence as death claimed all of the men.

His Honor, Mayor Bernard Bigler looked down to the street and realized how small people can look. Especially when you had the penthouse on the twenty-seventh floor of the Majestic Apartments.

"Like ants they crawl on their way," he said half aloud. And then a voice gave him a start.

"Like ants you have treated them. Stepped on them and killed them when it suited your purpose. You are the brains behind the gang. But they are all dead. Only you are alive."

His Honor looked at the man who had entered his apartment. There was no way getting past the two guards who were stationed outside.

"You are Frank Kassel," gasped the Mayor. "You died in the electric chair according to the radio broadcast. But if you are here then it is quite evident you aren't dead. I'll call the police and tell them to come here at once and arrest you."

"It is you who should be arrested. I notice on your table you have some papers that would send you to prison for the rest of your life."

The mayor backed up slowly to the wall and lifted his hand high above his head. There were two old civil war swords on hooks. He wanted to grab one and slash Frank. As he touched one, the other fell and went right through his neck. He fell to the floor and soon was dead.

Walter Simpson heard the report from one of his men that every one in the Daly gang had been found dead. And now it was known that the dead mayor had been the brains behind the gang.

"It must have been poor Frank and yet it couldn't have been."

"Ten minutes after he left the prison in his car he stopped for a traffic light and his heart quit. One of those heart attacks you never expect!"

THE END

LAWBREAKERS

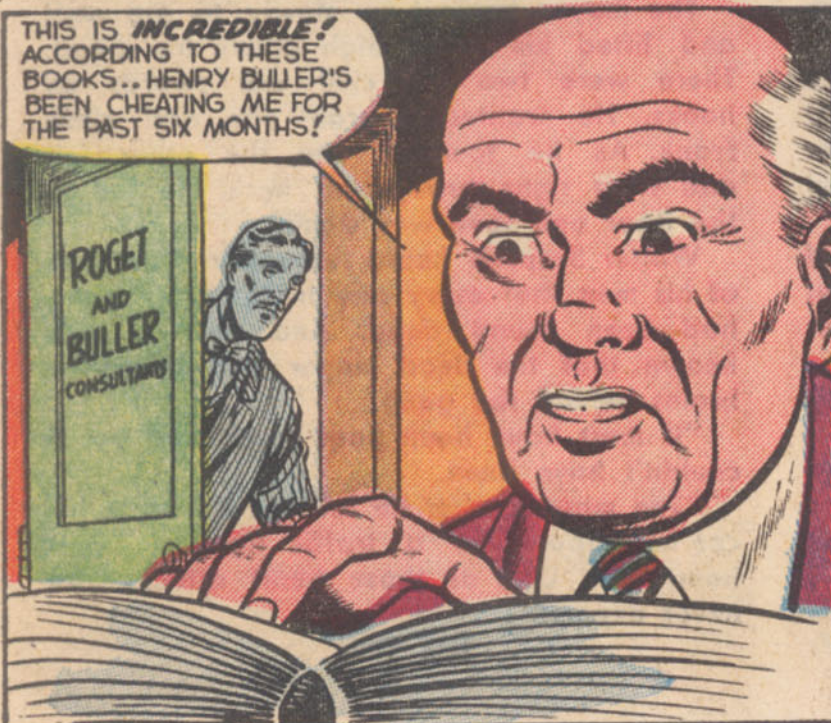
MMARTIN ROGET'S DILEMMA, DEAR READER, SHOULD GIVE YOU MUCH FOOD FOR THOUGHT. FOR POOR MARTIN REFUSED TO STOMACH HIS PARTNER'S UNPALATABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES, AND THAT LED TO...

MURDER ON RYE



Dick
Giordano

THIS IS **INCREDIBLE!**
ACCORDING TO THESE
BOOKS... HENRY BULLER'S
BEEN CHEATING ME FOR
THE PAST SIX MONTHS!



W-WHA... ?

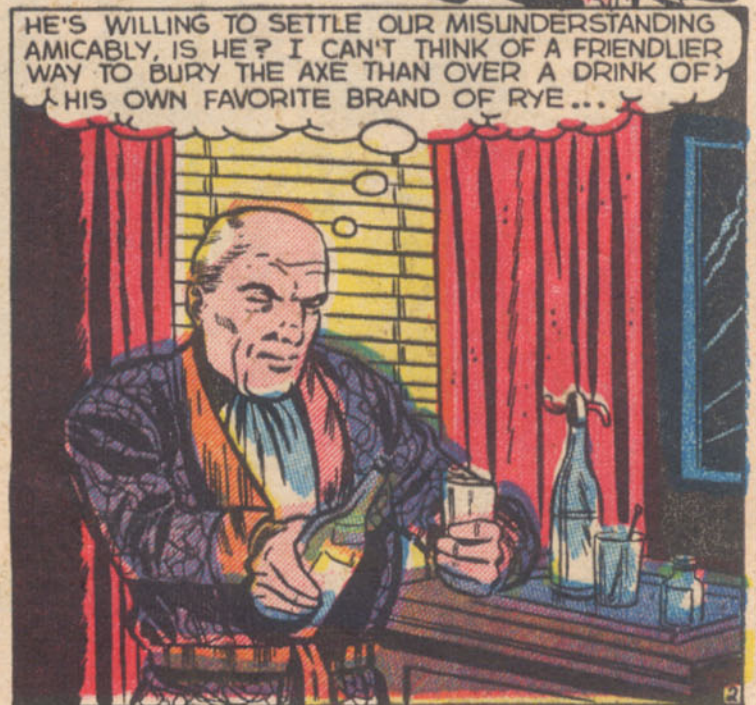
I'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS,
ROGET! WHATTA YOU MEAN
SNEAKING INTO MY OFFICE
AND SPYING ON
ME LIKE THIS?



LAWBREAKERS



AT A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE APPOINTED HOUR THAT NIGHT, THE NERVOUS HOST MADE HIS LAST MINUTE PREPARATIONS...

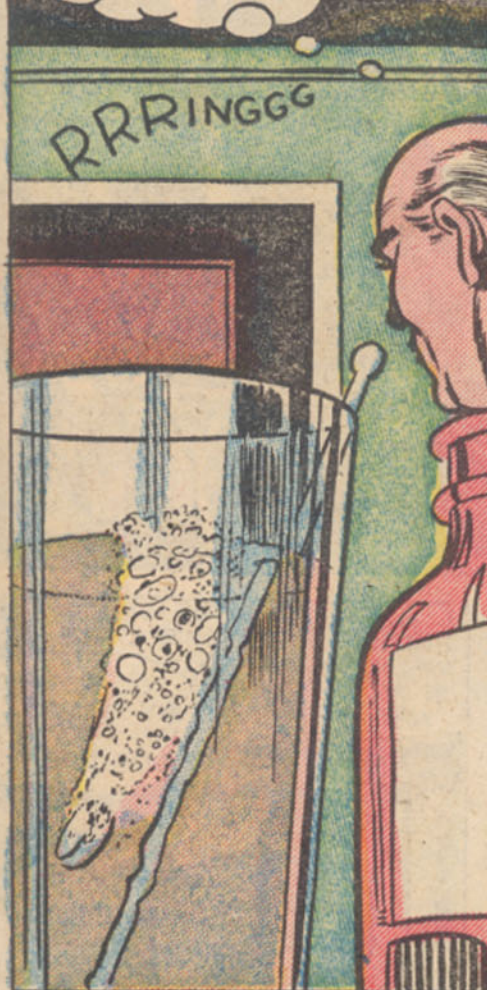


LAWBREAKERS

ONE RYE HIGHBALL FOR **ME**,
ONE FOR **HIM**. AND...BECAUSE
HE'S MY GUEST.. I'LL ADD
SOMETHING EXTRA TO BULLER'S
DRINK. SORT OF A **SURPRISE!**



AH, MY GUEST ARRIVES
ON THE DOT OF 9:30. ANXIOUS,
I'M SURE, TO START BLACK-
MAILING ME OVER THAT
ACME STOCK!



COME RIGHT IN, HENRY.
I WANT TO APOLOGIZE
FOR LOSING MY
HEAD IN THE
OFFICE THIS
AFTERNOON...

I'M THE
ONE WHO'S
SORRY,
MARTIN. I
DON'T KNOW WHAT
GOT INTO ME TO
MENTION THAT..ER
..STOCK INCIDENT.



IT'S FORGOTTEN!
NOW.. TO GET THE
CHILL OFF YOUR
BONES.. HERE'S
A NICE WARMING
DRINK!

W-WHY, THANKS!
I REALLY **AM** SORRY
ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED
IN THE OFFICE...

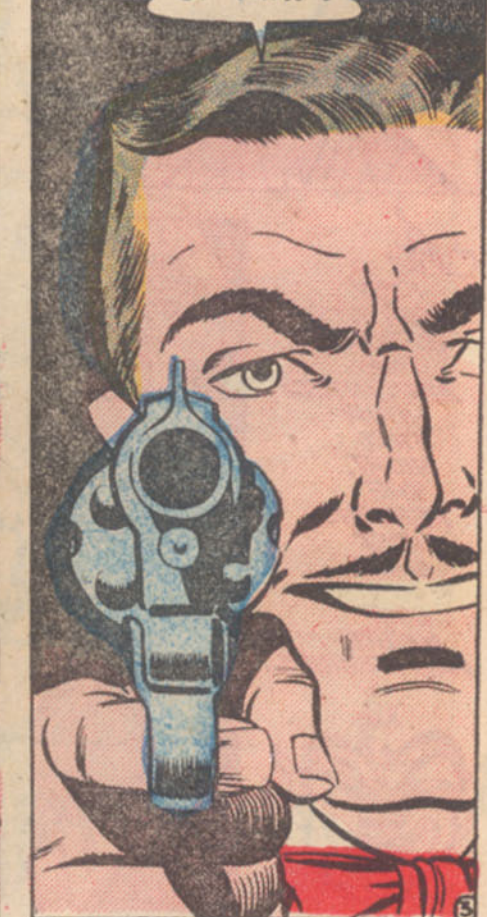


...BECAUSE I'M GOING TO
HAVE TO **KILL** YOU, MARTIN,
BEFORE YOU GO TO THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY WITH YOUR
STORY OF MY DOCTORING
THE BOOKS!

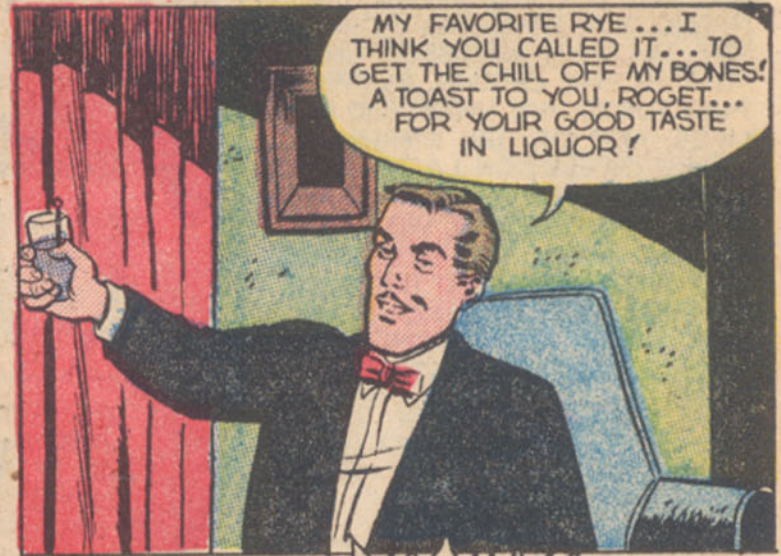
N-NO...
NO...



MIGHTY CONSIDERATE OF YOU,
DEAR PARTNER, TO HAVE THE
HOUSE EMPTY FOR OUR BIG
MEETING TONIGHT! I WAS
NERVOUS ABOUT WITNESSES..
BUT **YOU** TOOK CARE
OF **THAT!**



LAWBREAKERS



*What DID HENRY BULLER DRINK? WAS IT THE GLASS HIS PARTNER PLANNED FOR HIMSELF... OR WAS IT THE ONE FILLED WITH DEADLY YOU-KNOW-WHAT? SEND **YOUR** IDEA OF THE STORY'S ENDING TO ALFRED V. FAGO, 400 MADISON AVENUE., NEW YORK, N.Y. THE BEST SYNOPSIS RECEIVED WILL BE ILLUSTRATED IN AN EARLY ISSUE OF "LAWBREAKERS SUSPENSE STORIES." THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE **FULL CREDIT... AND \$10 IN CASH!***

LAWBREAKERS

DEAR READERS... WE WERE SWAMPED BY HUNDREDS OF ANSWERS TO OUR FOUR PAGE QUIZ, "D" AS IN DEATH... IN OUR LAST ISSUE OF LAWBREAKERS SUSPENSE. WE REGRET THAT WE WERE NOT ABLE TO USE MORE OF YOUR ANSWERS, BECAUSE MANY OF THEM WERE NEAR HITS. WE WOULD HAVE LIKED TO LIST SOME OF YOUR VERY GOOD ANSWERS BUT SPACE DOES NOT PERMIT. HOWEVER WE'VE COME UP WITH THE WINNER'S ANSWER TO "D" AS IN DEATH. ILLUSTRATED HERE AND THE WINNER IS PAUL WHITMORE 355 EDDY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA. THANKS PAUL AND PRIZE OF \$10 IS ON IT'S WAY TO YOU. EDITOR.

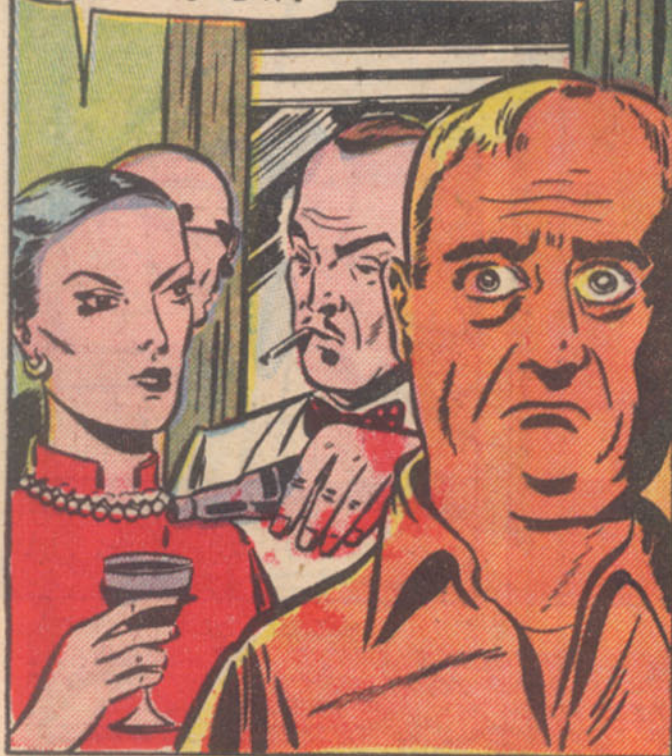
ANSWER TO "D" AS IN DEATH

SYNOPSIS

PHIL ROSS... OVERHEARD LARRY, HIS BEST FRIEND, AND HIS (PHIL'S) WIFE, SANDRA MAKING PLANS, FOR WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS HIS OWN UNTIMELY END... THE SCENE OPENS, AS PHIL HAS PUNCTURED THE HYDRAULIC BRAKE LINES, AND CUT THE EMERGENCY BRAKE CABLE, ON LARRY'S CAR. THEY'LL NEVER MAKE DEAD MAN'S TURN, PHIL THOUGHT WITH DEMONIAIC GLEE. THE BELL RANG, AND PHIL ANSWERED THE DOOR, TO FIND VISITORS INQUIRING FOR LARRY AND SANDRA... NOW ON WITH THE STORY...



OH, GOOD! THEY'LL BE BACK SOON THEN. THEY PROBABLY WENT TO TAKE SANDRA'S AND YOUR LUGGAGE TO THE AIRPORT. LARRY BEING YOUR BEST FRIEND DECIDED TO TREAT YOU BOTH TO A SECOND HONEYMOON AND GOING AWAY PARTY FOR YOUR ANNIVERSARY TONIGHT!



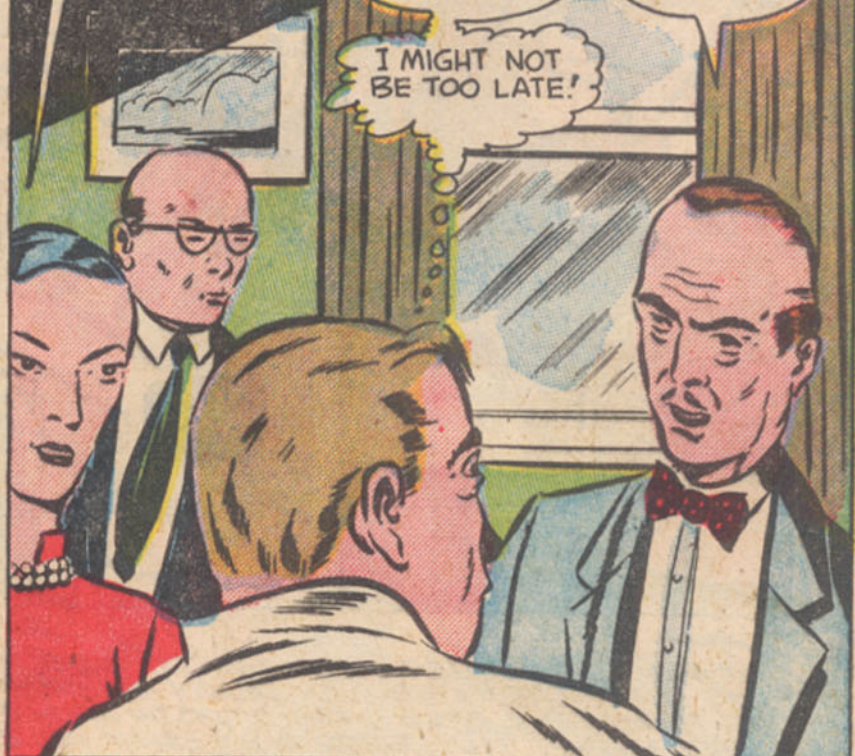
PHIL GASPED... IT COULDN'T BE... HE... HEARD... THEM... NO I MUST BE DREAMING... MAYBE THEY'RE NOT DEAD... I HAVE TO SEE (S-AS-IN-SURPRISE, PHIL)

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS WRONG, PHIL? YOU'RE AS PALE AS A GHOST!

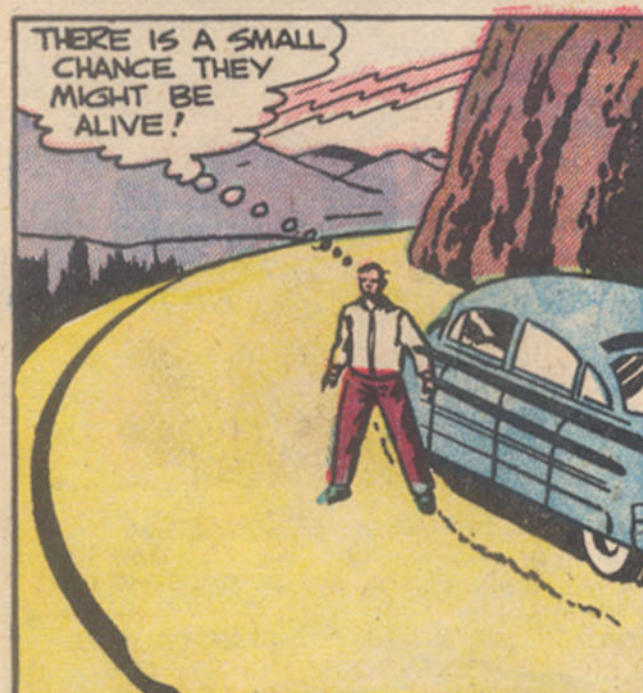
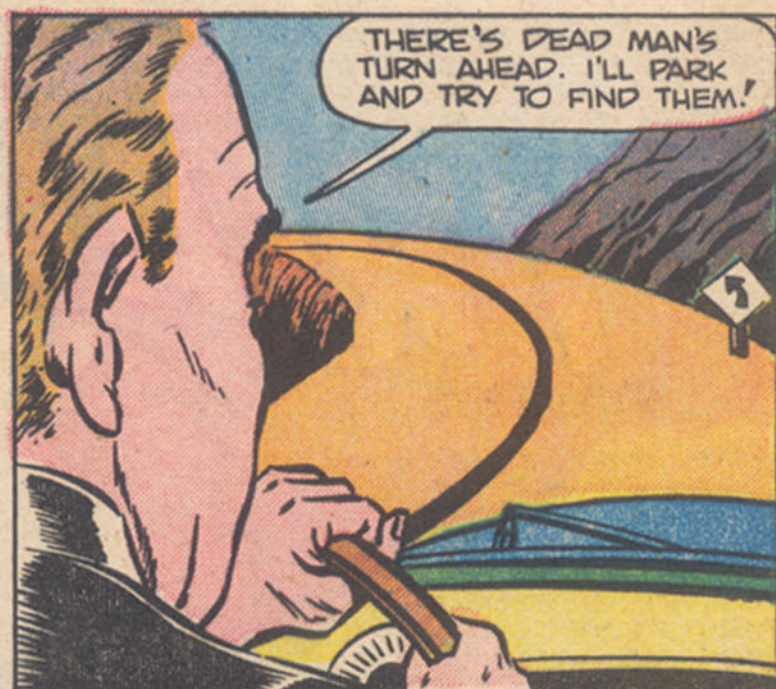
DON'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS. BUT CAN I USE YOUR CAR?

OF COURSE, PHIL, IT'S PARKED OUTSIDE!

I MIGHT NOT BE TOO LATE!



LA WBREAKERS



MEANTIME... WHAT IS THIS? LARRY AND SANDRA? YES DEAR READERS "FATE" IS A FICKLE MISTRESS! THE CONDITION OF THE BRAKES WAS DISCOVERED WHEN LARRY RAN INTO THE REAR OF A TRUCK. ONLY AN (M AS IN MINOR ACCIDENT.) WE PICK THEM UP COMING INTO DEAD MAN'S TURN!



LAWBREAKERS

IT WAS A PERFECT SETUP FOR BILL BRANNAN, BLACKSHEEP OF A ONCE WELL-TO-DO FAMILY. HE COULD INDULGE IN HIS PENT-UP DESIRE... AND AT THE SAME TIME MAKE MONEY! IT WAS PERFECT, THAT IS, UNTIL HE HAD HIS...

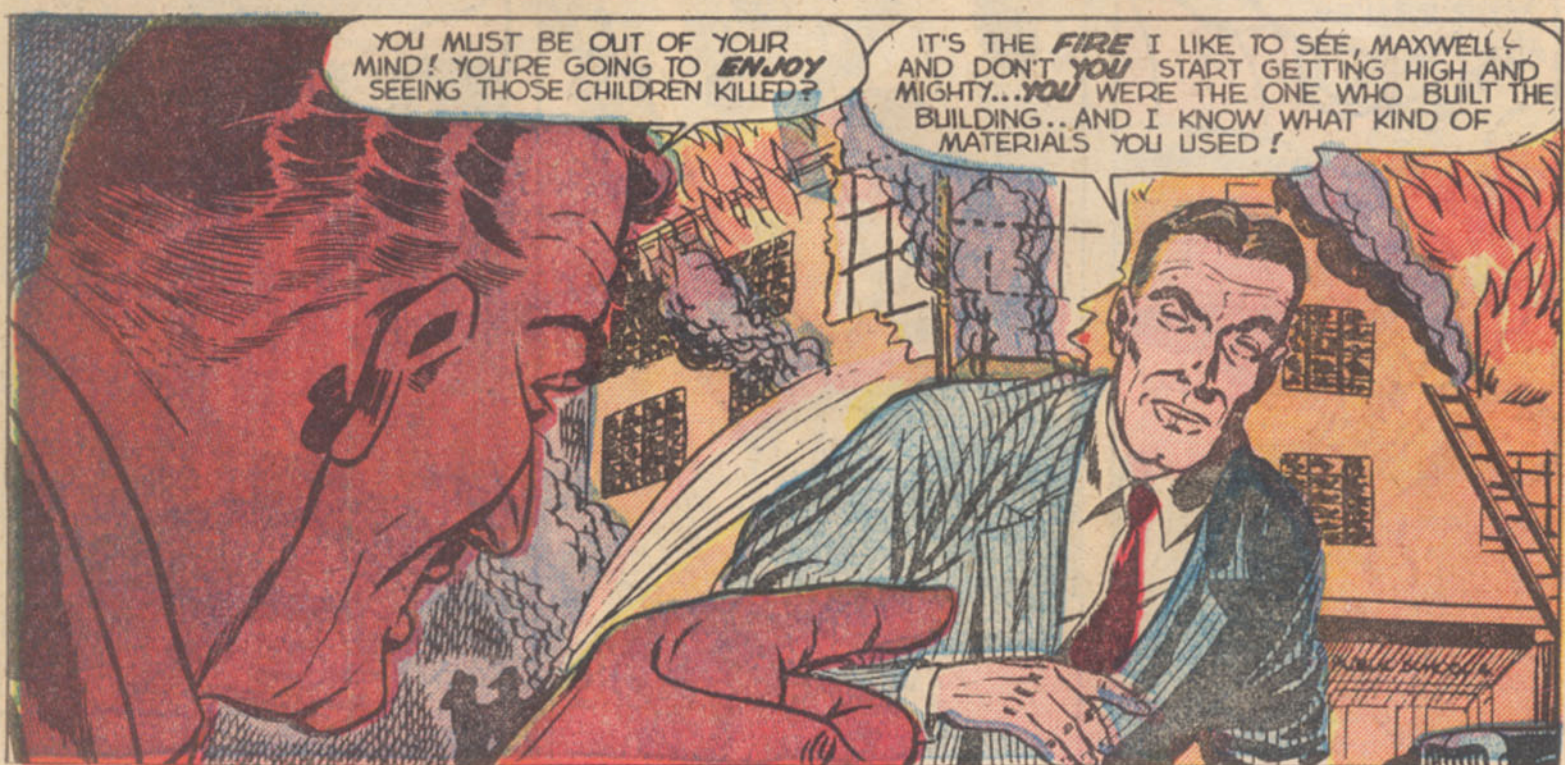
TRIAL BY FIRE



LOOK AT THE FLAMES, CLAYTON... THIS I'M GOING TO ENJOY!

THE BUILDING'S GOING TO FALL... THOSE POOR KIDS ARE TRAPPED!

GIORDANO TRATTINI



YOU MUST BE OUT OF YOUR MIND! YOU'RE GOING TO ENJOY SEEING THOSE CHILDREN KILLED?

IT'S THE FIRE I LIKE TO SEE, MAXWELL! AND DON'T YOU START GETTING HIGH AND MIGHTY... YOU WERE THE ONE WHO BUILT THE BUILDING... AND I KNOW WHAT KIND OF MATERIALS YOU USED!

LAWBREAKERS

SHUT UP, BILL! MAYBE I DID CUT A FEW CORNERS ON CONSTRUCTION COSTS, BUT I DIDN'T PLAN THIS! AS FOR YOU, YOU TAKE SUCH A FIENDISH DELIGHT IN WATCHING FIRES...

THAT'S **MY** BUSINESS. IT GIVES ME A KICK.. AND SO FAR IT ALSO PAYS MY LIVING EXPENSES. NOW LET'S GET TO THE RESTAURANT AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I'VE COOKED UP!



CLAYTON, FEARFUL OF BRANNAN AND HIS KNOWLEDGE, YET STRANGELY ATTRACTED, WAS MORE THAN WILLING TO LISTEN TO REASON...

I CURSE THE DAY YOU EVER FOUND OUT HOW I OPERATE! WHAT'S YOUR PLAN THIS TIME?

SIMPLE, I'M GOING TO **MIX** BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE! YOU OWN THE WAREHOUSE ON DELANEY STREET, RIGHT? WELL, JUST MAKE SURE IT'S INSURED FOR TWENTY THOUSAND, AND LEAVE THE REST TO ME!



FIFTY PERCENT FOR YOU... AND YOU'LL BE IN THE CLEAR. BETTER DO AS I SAY OR THE BUILDING BOARD WILL LEARN A FEW INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT YOUR CONSTRUCTION COMPANY!

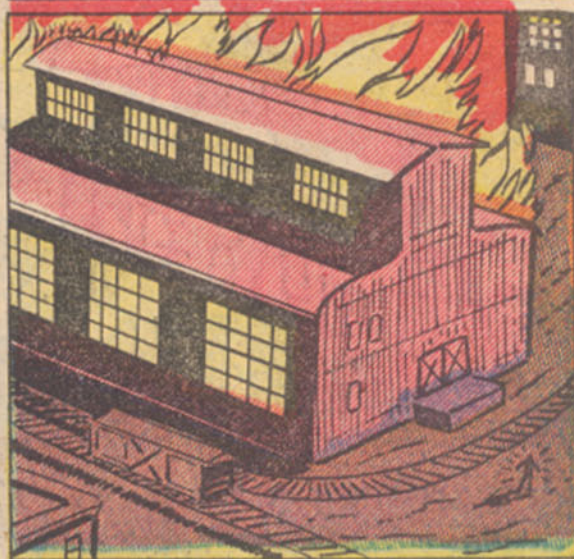


CLAYTON DIDN'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE, AND A FEW WEEKS LATER FOUND BILL BRANNAN HARD AT 'WORK'...

WHAT A BLAZE THIS'LL MAKE! THERE'LL BE A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN TONIGHT!

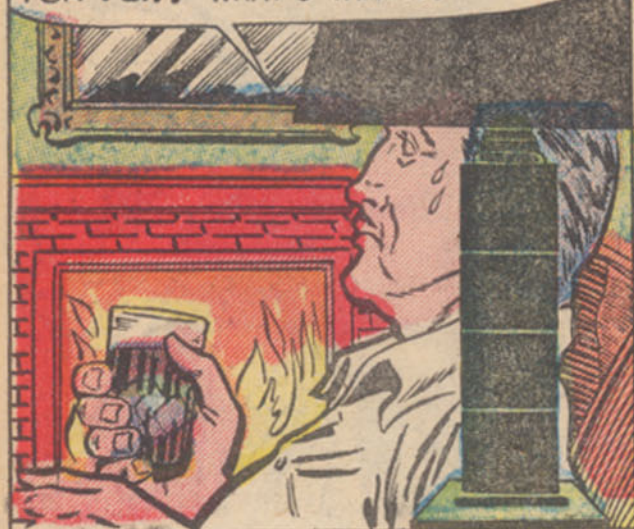


IT WAS A BEAUTY, ALL RIGHT. NIGHT TURNED INTO DAY, AND AS BILL WATCHED, HE HAD VISIONS OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS SOON TO COME!

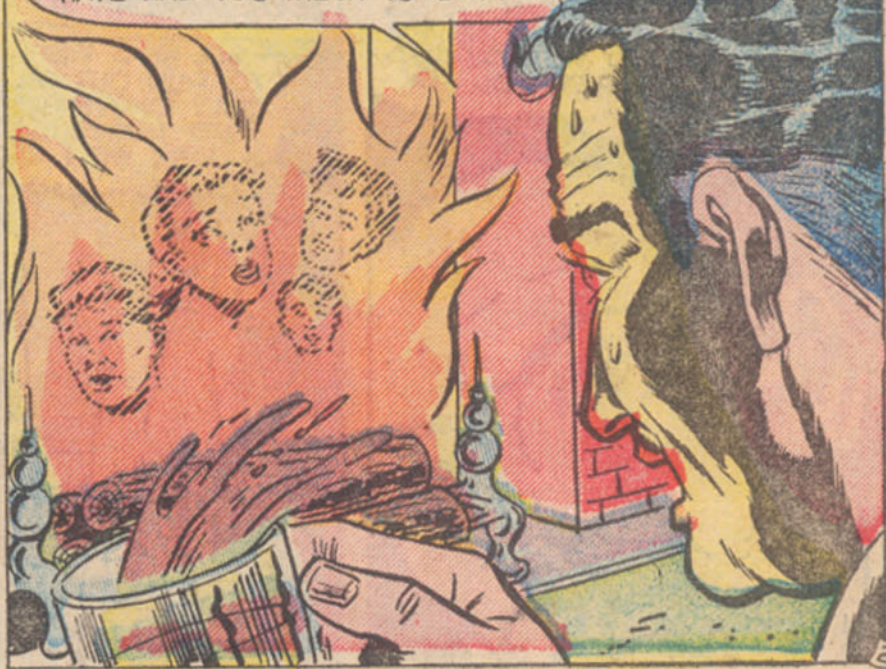


BUT FOR CLAYTON MAXWELL, OTHER NOT-SO- PLEASANT VISIONS FILLED HIS MIND!

CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THOSE KIDS IN THE SCHOOL! SUPPOSE BRANNAN STARTED THAT FIRE, JUST FOR **FUN**? WHAT'S THAT...

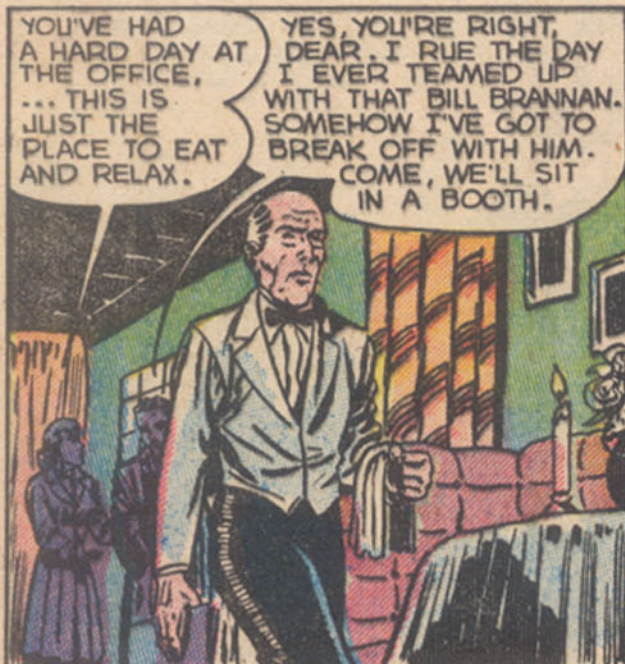


FACES IN THE FIRE! NO, IT CAN'T BE! I MUST HAVE HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK!



LAWBREAKERS

BUT ALCOHOL DIDN'T HELP! TERRIFIED, MAXWELL TURNED TO MARY NELLIS FOR ADVICE...



YOU'VE HAD A HARD DAY AT THE OFFICE, ... THIS IS JUST THE PLACE TO EAT AND RELAX.

YES, YOU'RE RIGHT, DEAR. I RUE THE DAY I EVER TEAMED UP WITH THAT BILL BRANNAN. SOMEHOW I'VE GOT TO BREAK OFF WITH HIM. COME, WE'LL SIT IN A BOOTH.



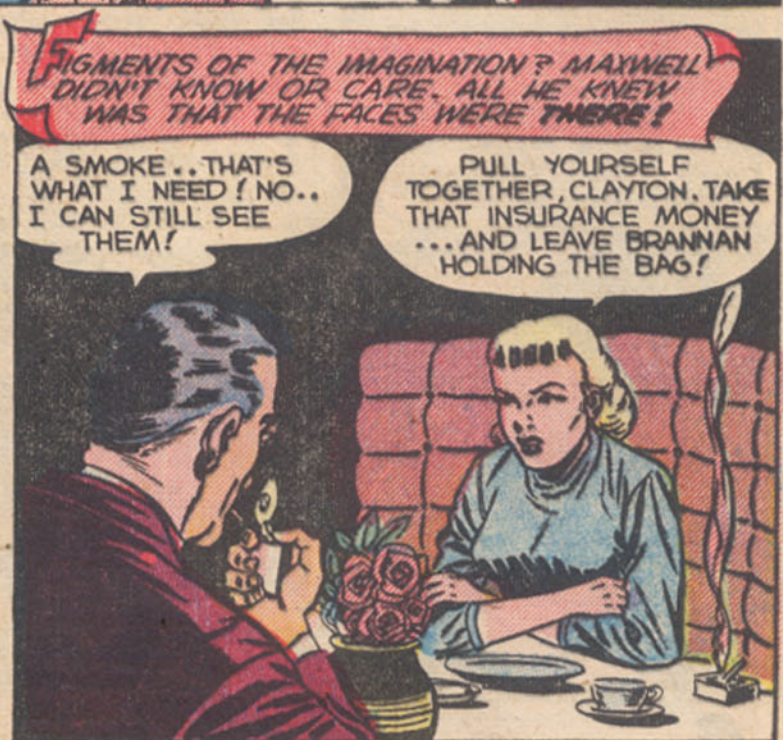
FACES IN THE CANDLES! PUT THEM OUT... PUT THEM OUT!

CLAYTON, GET HOLD OF YOURSELF! YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS!



SOMETHING WRONG, SIR? MAY I LIGHT THE CANDLES AGAIN?

NO, YOU FOOL! JUST GET OUT OF HERE AND BRING ME A DRINK... A DOUBLE BOURBON, AND FAST!



FIGMENTS OF THE IMAGINATION? MAXWELL DIDN'T KNOW OR CARE. ALL HE KNEW WAS THAT THE FACES WERE THERE!

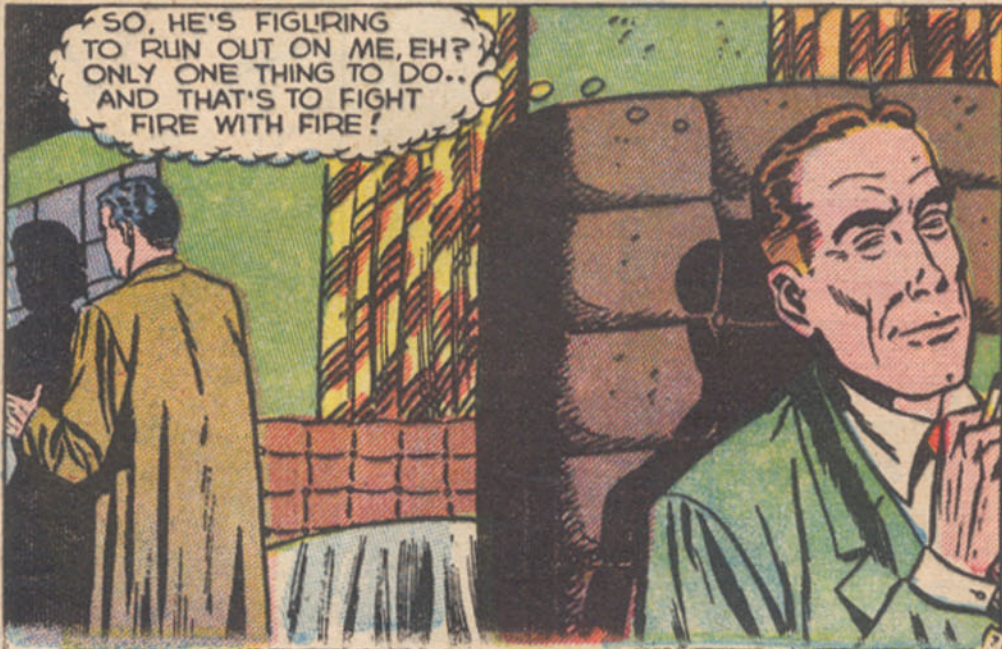
A SMOKE... THAT'S WHAT I NEED! NO... I CAN STILL SEE THEM!

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, CLAYTON. TAKE THAT INSURANCE MONEY... AND LEAVE BRANNAN HOLDING THE BAG!



YES, WHY NOT! WE CAN CROSS THE BORDER AND HE'LL NEVER FIND US. GO TO YOUR APARTMENT AND I'LL PICK YOU UP LATER!

BUT, UNKNOWN TO MAXWELL, OTHER EARS HAD HEARD THE PLAN.



SO, HE'S FIGURING TO RUN OUT ON ME, EH? ONLY ONE THING TO DO... AND THAT'S TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE!

LAWBREAKERS

LATER, IN MAXWELL'S APARTMENT.

TWENTY THOUSAND, THAT'LL HOLD US FOR A WHILE! ABOUT TIME I LEFT, ANYWAY. SOME OF THOSE JOBS I CHEATED ON WERE BOUND TO CATCH UP WITH ME!



I'LL PHONE IN AN ANONYMOUS TIP ABOUT BRANNAN SETTING THE FIRE, AND... WHO'S THAT ... **BILL!**

NEVER TALK OUT LOUD, FRIEND! PARTICULARLY IN RESTAURANT BOOTHS!



THIS WON'T HURT ... **MUCH!**

NO.. DON'T! YOU CAN HAVE ALL THE MONEY...

OW!



ROUND MINUTES LATER, WHEN MAXWELL'S BRAIN CLEARED...

WONDERING WHAT I'M DOING? MAYBE YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT, BUT WHISKEY'S JUST AS GOOD AS GASOLINE... THOUGH IT COSTS A HECK OF A LOT MORE!

HE'S CRAZY! I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO STOP THIS MADMAN!



I'VE GOT THE MONEY, MAX... AND HERE'S MY GOING AWAY PRESENT FOR YOU! MAYBE IT'S A LOUSY PLAN, BUT THIS'LL PROVE I'M A **MATCH** FOR YOU!



SO LONG, MAX! SEE YOU IN HADES SOMEDAY!

SOMEDAY... SOMEDAY I'LL PAY YOU BACK AND... **ARRGH!**



AND SO CLAYTON MAXWELL DIED AT THE HANDS OF A MASTER ARSONIST.. AND BEFORE BILL BRANNAN LAY A FUTURE BRIGHT WITH MONEY, AND FAME, OF A SORT!

LAWBREAKERS

THE NEXT DAY THE POLICE PICKED UP BILL AND TOOK HIM TO HEAD-QUARTERS FOR QUESTIONING...



START TALKING, FIREBUG. WE KNOW YOU WERE MIXED UP WITH MAXWELL AND THAT FIRE LOOKED LIKE YOUR HANDIWORK!

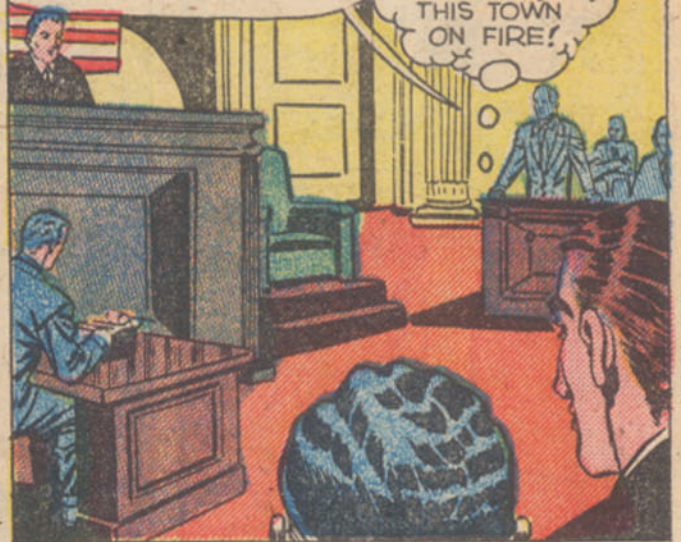
YOU'RE WAY OFF BASE... YOU HAVEN'T GOT A THING ON ME!



AND BILL WAS RIGHT, FOR LATER IN THE COURTROOM...

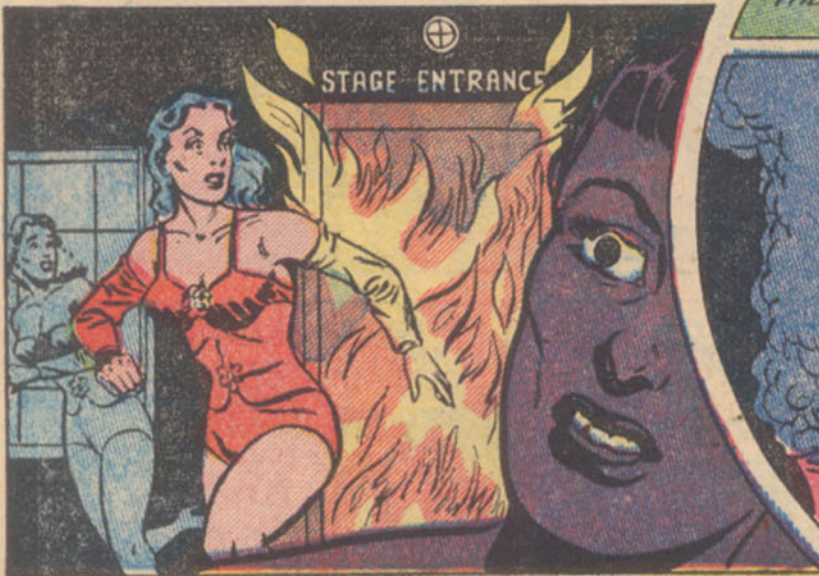
WE FEEL THIS MAN IS GUILTY, BUT THERE IS LACK OF SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO CONVICT...

LET 'EM TRY TO STOP ME... NOW I'LL REALLY SET THIS TOWN ON FIRE!



BRANNAN WASN'T KIDDING! ALL OVER THE CITY THE FLAMES STARTED SPURTING, AND SOMEHOW BRANNAN WAS NEVER CAUGHT. A FEW OF THE FIRES WERE JUST FOR FUN AND KICKS...

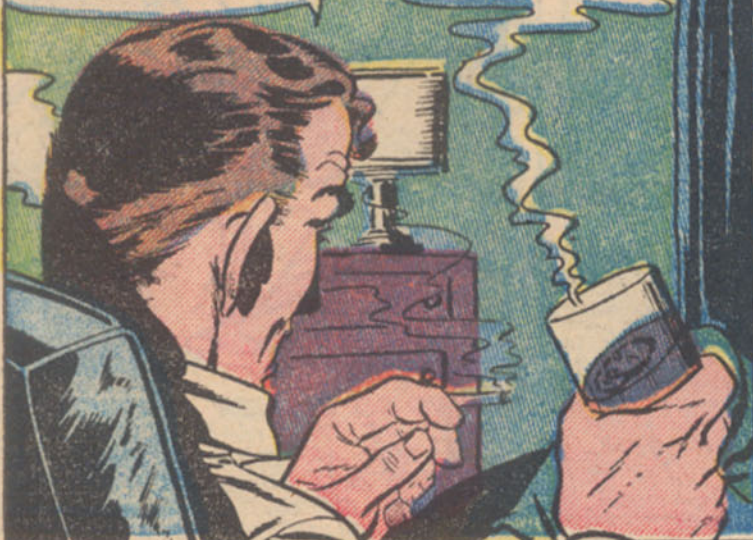
WHILE OTHERS WERE FOR MONEY, FOR INSTANCE, A FIRE OF MYSTERIOUS ORIGIN BROKE OUT IN THE BERRIN CHEMICAL PLANT, BUT IT WASN'T SO MYSTERIOUS TO BILL OR THE OWNER. THEY SHARED THE FIFTY THOUSAND IN INSURANCE!



BUT GOOD THINGS EVENTUALLY HAD TO COME TO AN END! BILL CALLED IT 'NERVES', BUT ONE NIGHT AS HE SIPPED A DRINK...

THAT FACE... IT'S CLAYTON MAXWELL! I MUST BE DRUNK!

YOU LIVED BY FIRE... YOU'LL DIE BY FIRE!



VOICES... NOW I KNOW I'VE HAD TOO MUCH! ONE MORE JOB AND I'LL QUIT THE RACKET AND GET OUT OF TOWN!

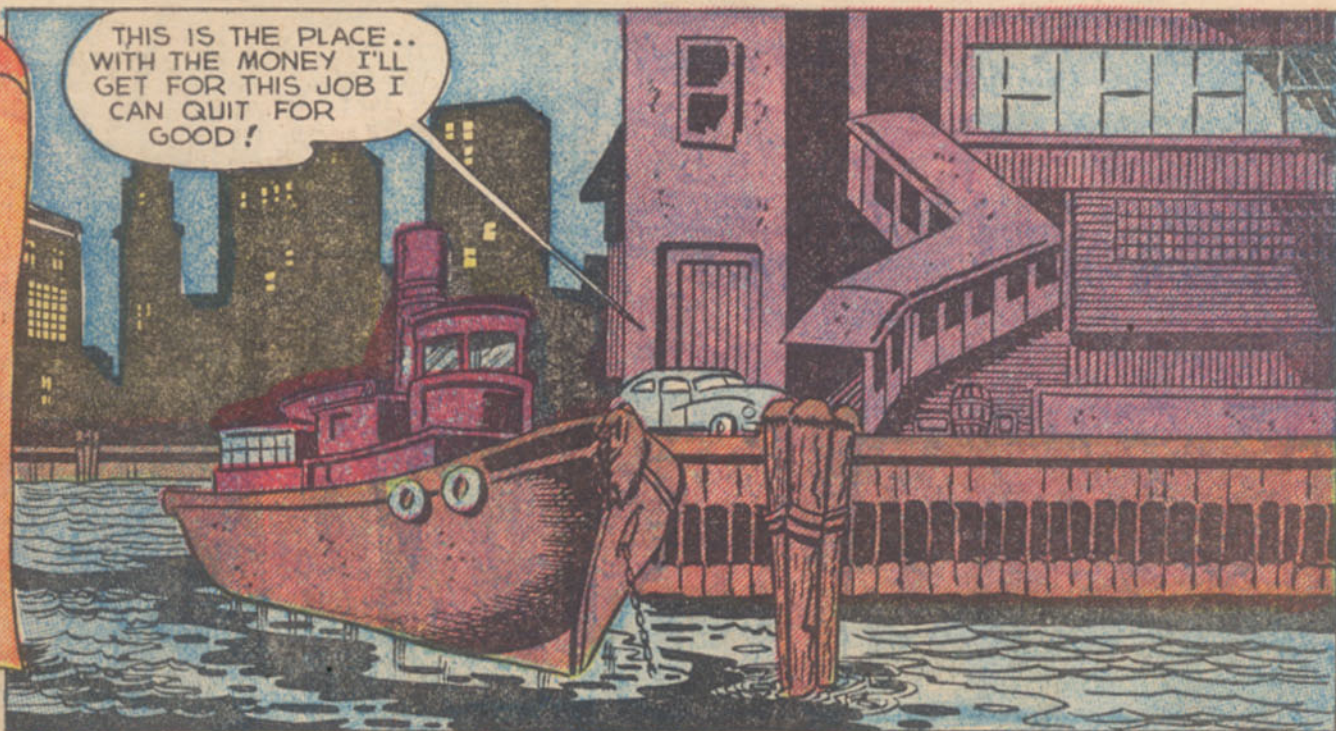


BILL DIDN'T KNOW IT THEN, BUT HIS SPREE IN CRIME WAS ALMOST OVER... IT WAS TIME FOR HIS TRIAL BY FIRE!

LAWBREAKERS

ONE LAST JOB! THAT NIGHT BILL BRANNAN DROVE DOWN TO THE DARKENED WATERFRONT, BUT HE WAS STILL UNABLE TO QUIET THE BUTTERFLIES IN HIS STOMACH...

THIS IS THE PLACE... WITH THE MONEY I'LL GET FOR THIS JOB I CAN QUIT FOR GOOD!



IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER TO GET INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE WITH THE KEY THE OWNER HAD GIVEN HIM... AND BILL WAS ONCE AGAIN AT 'WORK'...

I'LL HAVE CLOSE TO A HUNDRED THOUSAND... WITH THAT KIND OF MONEY I CAN LIVE LIKE A KING FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE! FUNNY, THOUGH, I KEEP THINKING I HEAR CLAYTON MAXWELL'S VOICE!



IT IS MAX! BUT HE'S NOT GOING TO GET ME!



THE FIRE ESCAPE... THAT'S IT! GOT TO GET OUT WHILE THERE'S STILL A CHANCE! I'M NOT GOING TO LET MAX MAKE ME FLUB THIS CHANCE!



WHAT'S THAT? A SIREN! MAYBE THE POLICE GOT A TIP ON ME! BUT THEY'LL COME UP THE FRONT WAY... AND I'LL MAKE MY GETAWAY FROM THE REAR!

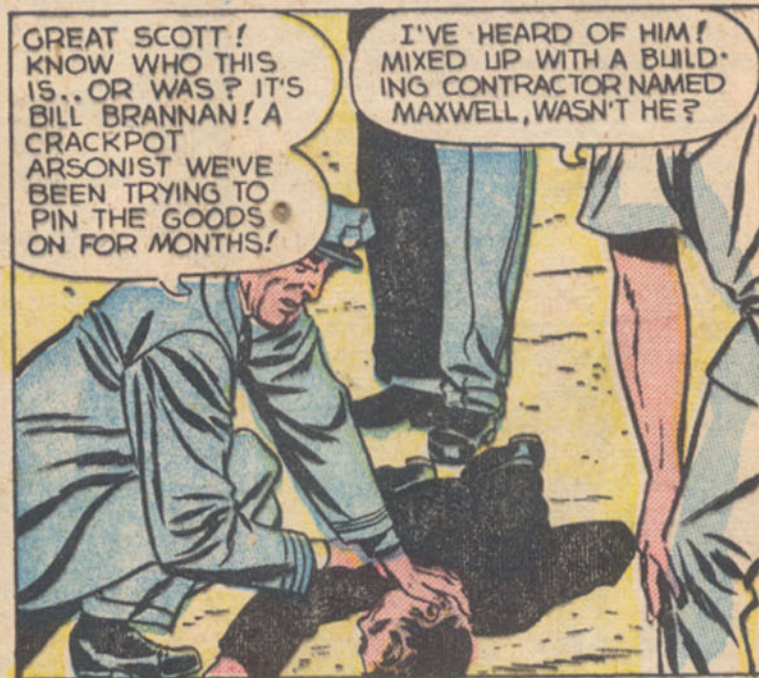
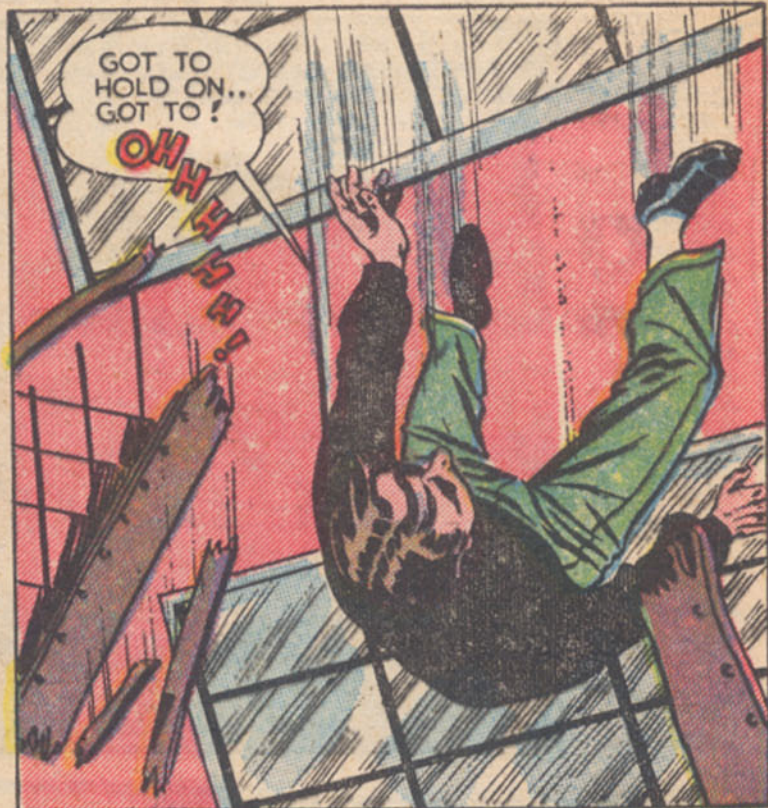
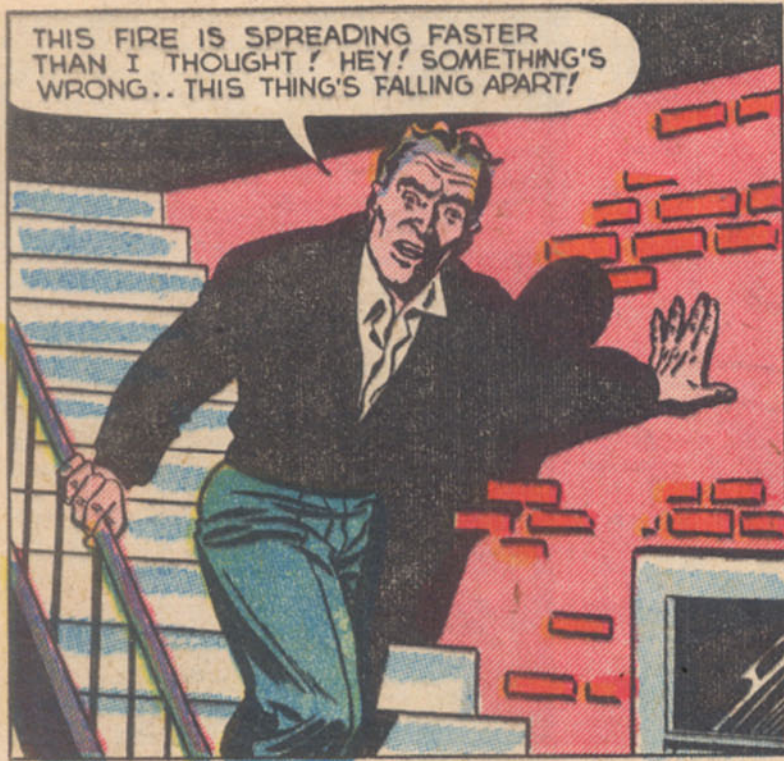


BILL BRANNAN RAN TO THE RICKETY FIRE ESCAPE AS THE FLAMES SPREAD, SURE THAT HIS ONE LAST JOB WAS IN THE BAG...

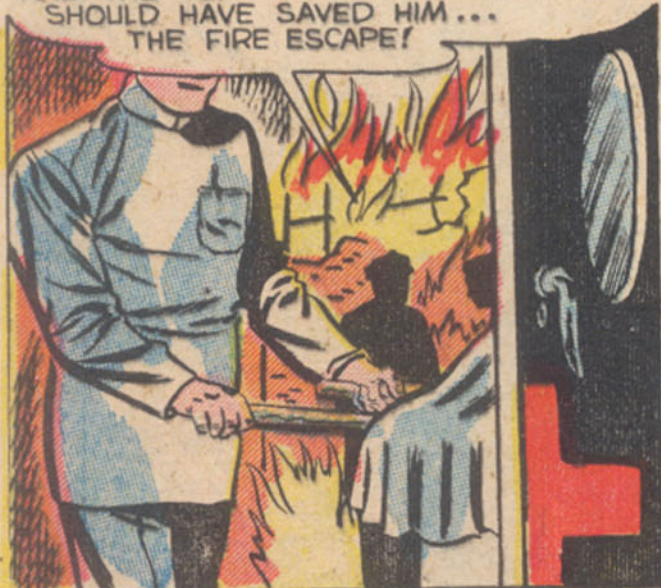
I MUST BE WACKY! I STILL KEEP HEARING MAX'S VOICE... SAYING HE'LL GET BACK AT ME!



LAWBREAKERS



RIGHT... BUT WE COULD NEVER PROVE THAT BRANNAN KILLED HIM! TALK ABOUT IRONY, THIS IS THE CLINCHER! THIS GUY MADE HIS LIVING BY SETTING FIRES... AND THE VERY THING THAT KILLED HIM SHOULD HAVE SAVED HIM...
THE FIRE ESCAPE!



DOUBLE IRONY, I CALL IT! MAXWELL WAS MIXED UP IN SOME SHADY BUILDING CONTRACTS USING CHEAP MATERIAL... AND MAXWELL WAS THE ONE THAT BUILT THIS WAREHOUSE WITH THE FAULTY FIRE ESCAPE!



THE POLICE MARKED THE CASE CLOSED... BUT FOR BILL BRANNAN, HE HAD HIS TRIAL BY FIRE!

THE END

LAWBREAKERS

FOR WEEKS PAUL KLING HAD OBSERVED THE TIME-MECHANISM CONTROLLING THE HUGE BANK VAULT DOOR. HE KNEW TO A SPLIT-SECOND WHEN THE VAULT OPENED AUTOMATICALLY EACH DAY... TO THE LAST BREATH THE AMOUNT OF OXYGEN THE VAULT CONTAINED. THEN UNEXPECTEDLY, HE CAME FACE TO FACE WITH HIS...

CHANCE of a LIFETIME!



THE DOOR'S SHUT... AND NO ONE CAN OPEN IT UNTIL THE TIME-MECHANISM RELEASES THE LOCK AT 9 O'CLOCK TOMORROW MORNING! NOW TO GET TO WORK!..



FUNNY HOW YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT FATE HAS IN STORE FOR YOU. FOR WEEKS I WAITED FOR THE CHANCE TO SLIP IN HERE UNNOTICED JUST BEFORE THE DOOR SHUT... AND IT WAS NO DICE! THEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN... **HERE I AM!** WITH ALL THIS DOUGH IN MY HANDS!

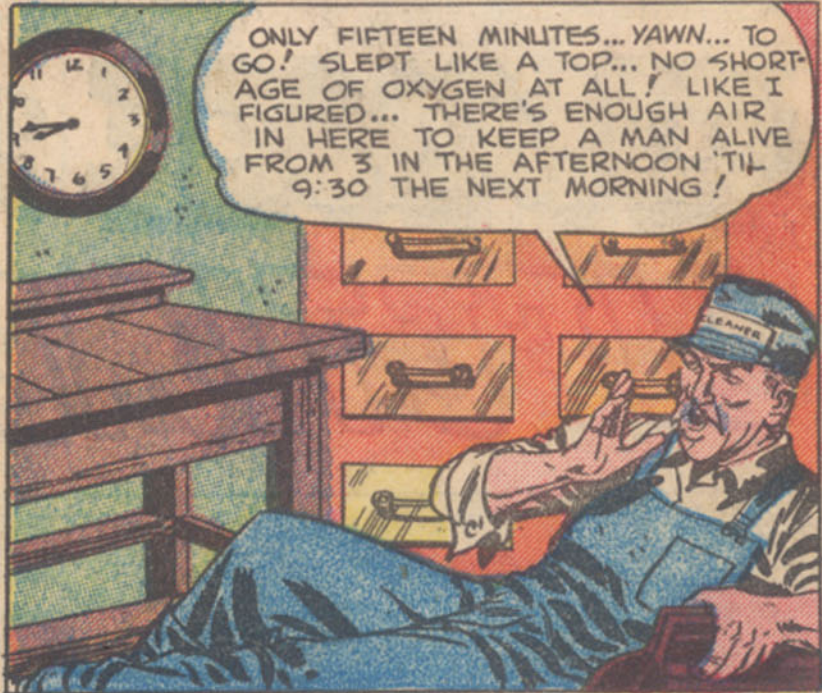


LAWBREAKERS

THAT FINISHES THE JOB... OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS IN THAT VALISE! JUST WAITING FOR ME TO WALK OUT WITH IT THE MOMENT THE DOORS OPEN AT 9 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING! AND NOTHING TO DO... BUT DREAM ABOUT HOW I'M GOING TO SPEND THE DOUGH!



THE HOURS SPED QUICKLY FOR PAUL KLING, AFTER HE FELL ASLEEP IN THE QUIET CHAMBER. AFTER HE AWOKE...

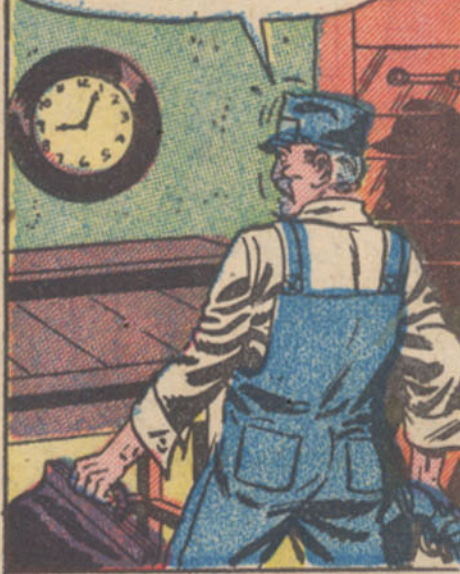


ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES... YAWN... TO GO! SLEPT LIKE A TOP... NO SHORTAGE OF OXYGEN AT ALL! LIKE I FIGURED... THERE'S ENOUGH AIR IN HERE TO KEEP A MAN ALIVE FROM 3 IN THE AFTERNOON 'TIL 9:30 THE NEXT MORNING!

ONLY A FEW MINUTES TO GO NOW! AS SOON AS THOSE DOORS BEGIN TO SLIDE OPEN, OUT I POP! THE BANK GUARDS'LL BE SO SURPRISED I'LL BE BLOCKS FROM HERE BEFORE THEY GIVE THE ALARM!



I- IT CAN'T BE! T-THE CLOCK SAYS 9:05... YET THE VAULT HAS BEEN OPENING AT 9 O'CLOCK EVERY FRIDAY FOR WEEKS! T-THERE ISN'T MUCH OXYGEN LEFT IN HERE...



ONLY ENOUGH OXYGEN LEFT TO KEEP ME ALIVE FOR 5 MINUTES MORE! T-THE WHOLE THING'S CRAZY! LET ME OUT... **HELP! S-SOMEONE...**



F- FOR WEEKS I CHECKED THE TIME-MECHANISM... AND IT NEVER FAILED TO OPEN THE VAULT DOOR AT 9! I CAN HARDLY... GASP... BREATHE NOW! NO MORE OXY... WHAT'S THIS? A C-CALENDAR... IT CAN'T BE!!!

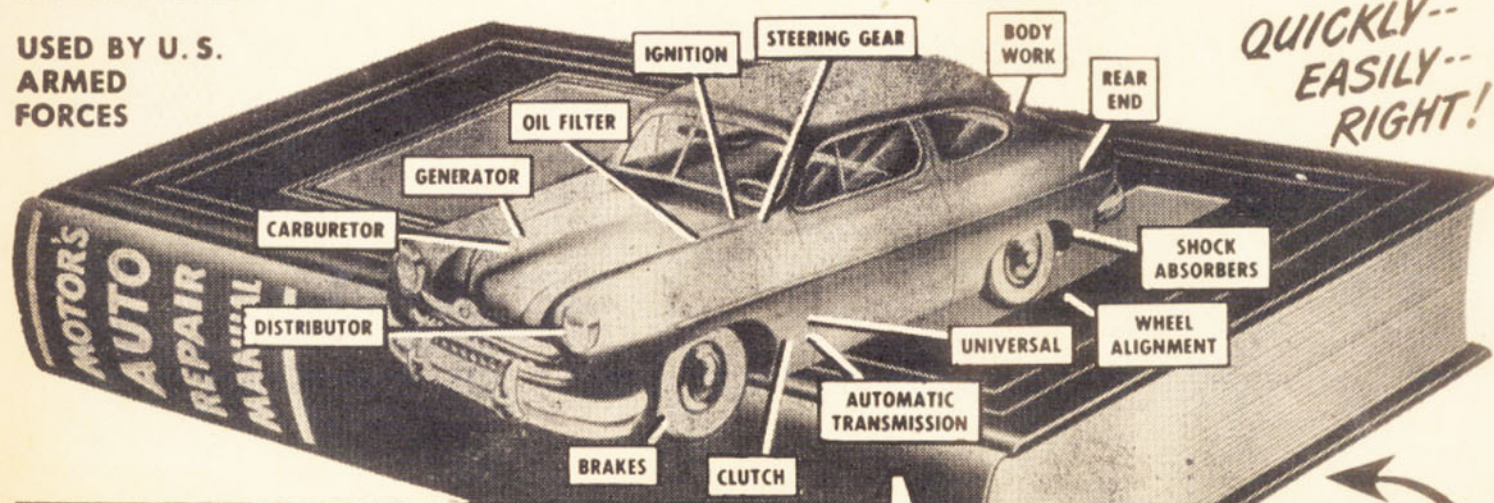


T-TODAY... GASP... IS FEBRUARY 22! WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY!!! THE BANK... GASP... DOESN'T OPEN 'TILL MONDAY! **I-I'M DOOMED!!!**



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